



Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-95-0046

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Arab-Israeli Talks

Israeli, Syrian Diplomats View Christopher's Tour
NC0803213395 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800
GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In exclusive interviews with the MBC in Washington, the Syrian and Israeli ambassadors expressed their hope that Christopher will be able to overcome obstacles blocking progress on the Lebanese and Syrian tracks. But they did not conceal the delicate stage which the peace process has reached and the difficulty of Christopher's mission. 'Aziz Fahmi sent us the details in this report:

[Begin recording] [Fahmi] Before Warren Christopher left Washington, U.S. officials said Christopher realizes the difficulty facing the peace process and that there is a total paralysis on the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations track and a complete deadlock on the Syrian-Israeli track. The main question is whether Christopher is carrying new U.S. ideas to activate the Syrian-Israeli track.

[Israeli Ambassador in Washington Itamar Rabinovich] I do not think Secretary Christopher is coming to the region with new U.S. ideas. But he is going there with a great deal of good intentions and creativeness in dealing with the Syrian-Israeli peace process, which enabled him to do miracles on this track in the past. He will listen to the two countries' leaders and this will enable him to identify the points of disagreement and agreement.

[Syrian Ambassador in Washington Walid al-Mu'allim] The U.S. sponsor found out that the ambassadors had reached the maximum limit of their authority so they suggested that Secretary Christopher conduct a tour to discuss these issues with the region's leaders to energize the peace process.

How to reinvigorate the peace process will be clear when Israel agrees on the principles of the security arrangements.

[Fahmi] And the Syrians blame the U.S. Administration for helping Israel to circumvent the Madrid Conference formula on reaching a comprehensive peace and for relying on separate solutions instead of a simultaneous, comprehensive solution.

[Al-Mu'allim] We are now seeing the results of deviating from the Madrid peace process. As I said, this process stemmed from certain bases, foremost of which is the establishment of a comprehensive peace on all tracks. This deviation led to setbacks and the U.S. sponsor, who contributed to this deviation along with Israel, now has to handle this issue by achieving a just and comprehensive peace.

[Fahmi] What about the Israeli naval blockade of the Lebanese shores?

[Al-Mu'allim] I consider this blockade to be aggression against Lebanon. Therefore, I see it as in the U.S.

interest to stop this hostile act against Lebanon's sovereignty in order to improve the atmosphere of Christopher's tour. [end recording]

Final Statement Issued Following Repatriation Talks

JN0803125895 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
8 Mar 95 p 7

["Full text of the final statement" issued by delegations from Jordan, Egypt, Israel, and the Palestinian Authority following their meeting on "Palestinians displaced from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1967" in Amman on 7 March]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Delegations from Israel, the PLO, Jordan and Egypt met in Amman on March 7th, 1995, as the Continuing Committee for the purpose of deciding by agreement the modalities of admission of Palestinians displaced from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1967, together with necessary measures to prevent disruption and disorder and other matters of common concern.

The ministerial meeting based its frame of reference on the DoP [Declaration of Principles] and its Annexes, and Agreed Minutes, and on parallel clauses pertaining to displaced persons in the Jordanian-Israeli Peace Treaty, and in the Camp David Accords.

The four parties agreed on the structure of the continuing Committee for the displaced persons, and other matters of common concern, which would meet at ministerial and technical levels. With regard to the technical level, it was agreed that each delegation is to be composed of three permanent members at senior level, joined by experts as needed. The venue of the meetings of the technical committee would be by rotation. The first meeting will be convened within a month from today. Thereafter, meetings will be held normally every three weeks. Meetings at the ministerial level will be held by rotation every two/three months. The technical level will report to the ministerial level.

Relevant confidence-building measures shall be discussed in the Continuing Committee.

The Ministerial Committee reaffirms its commitment to the speedy solution of this question to enhance the peace process.

Israeli, Arab Tourism Ministers Hold News Conference

TA0703122595 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 7 Mar 95
p A12

[Report by tourism affairs correspondent Ilan Shehori]

[FBIS Translated Text] Jordanian Tourism Minister 'Abd-al-Ilan al-Khatib yesterday told Israeli Tourism Minister 'Uzi Bar'am that in his view, "tourism ties between Jordan and Israel would not suffer as a result of

the vandalism perpetrated by Israeli tourists at Aaron's Grave in Jordan." The two men met at the international tourism fair, ITB.

After a group of religious tourists from Israel was discovered to have erased ancient Christian inscriptions and added graffiti of their own, the Jordanian authorities decided last weekend to ban Israelis from entering the site. The Jordanian tourism minister told Bar'am that to the best of his knowledge, "the scope of complaints against Israeli tourists in Jordan was small, and the authorities were therefore taking this incident very seriously."

Bar'am told his Jordanian counterpart that he took "a very grave view of the reported vandalism." Bar'am noted that he had ordered "an investigation into the possibility of prosecuting the Israelis involved."

Bar'am held a joint news conference in Berlin yesterday with the Jordanian tourism minister and Egyptian Tourism Minister Mamduh al-Biltaji. The three men announced that their respective countries would launch a joint marketing plan in Europe. At the meeting, the three ministers revealed that a team made up of officials from the tourism ministries of all three countries would prepare special tourism routes under the slogan: "Visit Jerusalem, Petra, and the pyramids."

At the news conference, the Egyptian tourism minister said that "he attributes special importance to the development of the joint tourism project around the 'Red Sea riveria,' together with Jordan and Israel. Al-Biltaji said that "the Egyptian authorities are currently examining the draft plans prepared by Israel on this matter." Bar'am said that he would "tour Egypt and Jordan in April in order to promote the tourism agreements among the three countries."

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat in Tunis for Talks With Fatah Members

JN0803152495 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic
1400 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat arrived in Tunis this morning on a short visit. During the visit, 'Arafat will meet with members of the Fatah Central Committee and discuss with them a proposal to convene an official meeting of the Fatah Central Committee. Our sources said that the Fatah Central Committee meeting will precede a meeting of the PLO Executive Committee, which will be held on 18 March to discuss the peace process with Israel.

Meeting With Qaddumi, 'Abbas 'Successful'

JN0803221495 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic
1830 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat will hold talks with King Hassan II of Morocco in Rabat this evening. Voice of Palestine sources have said that before arriving in

Morocco, his excellency the president held important talks with members of the Fatah Central Committee in Tunis. For more details, Yusuf al-Qazzaz held this interview with Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, adviser to President 'Arafat:

[Begin recording] [al-Qazzaz] Brother Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, adviser to President Yasir 'Arafat: What was the focus of the president's discussions in Tunis today?

[Abu-Rudaynah] As you know, en route to Morocco for a meeting with His Majesty King Hassan II, President Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] stopped over for three hours in Tunis. He met in Tunis with brothers Faruq Qaddumi and Mahmud 'Abbas for about two hours. It was a good, brotherly, and successful meeting. President Abu-'Ammar briefed the brother members of the Fatah Central Committee, who are also members of the PLO Executive Committee, on the situation in Gaza and the region. They agreed to set dates for the next meetings of the Fatah Central Committee and the PLO Executive Committee.

[Al-Qazzaz] So, the Fatah Central Committee meeting will precede the PLO Executive Committee meeting?

[Abu-Rudaynah] Yes, the Fatah Central Committee will meet under President Abu-'Ammar. That will be followed by a meeting by the PLO Executive Committee. The meetings will be held in Tunis very soon. As I said, it was a good, successful, and positive meeting [between 'Arafat, Qaddumi, and 'Abbas].

[Al-Qazzaz] Will the peace process be discussed during the two meetings?

[Abu-Rudaynah] It is a Palestinian decision that the peace process must be reassessed. This is a decision that has been adopted by the PLO Executive Committee and the National Authority. It is also a decision that has been adopted by the Palestinian Council of Ministers, which was convened on 4 March, and which called for a comprehensive reassessment of the entire peace process.

[Al-Qazzaz] Brother Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, will you discuss with His Majesty King Hassan II of Morocco today the peace process as well?

[Abu-Rudaynah] As you know, brother Abu-'Ammar arrived in Rabat 30 minutes ago. He was welcomed at the airport by Crown Prince Sidi Mohamed. The president is expected to meet with King Hassan II within an hour. The focus of the meeting will be the peace process, Morocco's active and effective role, and His Majesty Hassan II's efforts in supporting the Palestine question and Palestinian rights.

[Al-Qazzaz] This is especially true regarding the Jerusalem issue, since King Hassan II chairs the Jerusalem Committee?

[Abu-Rudaynah] Yes, this is especially true since His Majesty King Hassan II is the head of the Jerusalem Committee and he adopts historic, distinguished stands in favor of the Palestinian people and the Palestine question. Morocco has always been a support for Palestinian rights.

[Al-Qazzaz] We thank brother Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, adviser to brother President Yasir 'Arafat. [end recording]

'Arafat Returns to Gaza

JN0903091195 *Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
0900 GMT 9 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat returned to the homeland from Morocco a short while ago. During his visit to Morocco, he met with Moroccan King Hassan II.

His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat will meet with Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres at the presidency in Gaza today. The discussion will focus on the pending issues between the two sides, particularly the Israeli army's redeployment, holding the Palestinian legislative elections, and the issue of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories.

Bal'awi Denies Reports on Tunis Fatah Meeting

JN0803214695 *Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
1830 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Fatah Central Committee member Hakam Bal'awi has denied reports about a Fatah Central Committee meeting.

In a statement, he said that what took place were consultations among the Fatah Central Committee members to prepare for the Central Committee's expected and important meeting which will be held under the chairmanship of President Yasir 'Arafat.

Bal'awi pointed out that the Fatah Central Committee meeting will not take place before the completion of important political meetings between President Yasir 'Arafat and each of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, British Prime Minister John Major, and Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres this month.

Editorial Warns of Anti-U.S. 'Intifadah' in Region

TA0803161595 *Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic* 8 Mar 95
pp 8, 7

[Editorial: "U.S. Pressure Will Spark Arab Anger"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] If because of pressure from the U.S. Congress the U.S. Administration has backed down from its financial obligations to Jordan, promised at the beginning of the peace process, then this retreat should be added to a series of Washington decisions that convey the impression that there is an intention to continue provoking, insulting, and humiliating the Arabs. This step was preceded by a U.S. decision to use their veto in the Security Council to prevent any measure that calls for the lifting of the blockade imposed on Iraq and the easing of the sanctions on the Iraqi people. Moreover, the United States, master of the new world, threatened to use their veto in the Security Council against any resolution condemning the expansion of

Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories. In a related development, the United States is intensifying pressure on the Egyptian Government to moderate its stance with regard to signing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT]. It is not unlikely that the United States will hint at halting the annual financial aid to Egypt and link this aid to the signing of the treaty and to the rejection of Egypt's demand to link its signing of the NPT to Israel's signing.

It is apparent from the four issues that concern the Arab nation that the United States is firmly standing in the rank opposed to this nation and to the minimal aspirations and hopes of the Arab people. After all this, some people still ask: Why this hatred of the United States? There is no ancient enmity between the Arab people and the American people. On the contrary, bonds of admiration and appreciation link the Arabs with the American people, but it is U.S. foreign policy that insists on portraying the ugly face of the U.S. U.S. support for positions hostile to the Arab nation drive the Arab people to oppose U.S. policy in the region.

Even if the United States succeeds in obtaining the support of Arab leaders, popular anger—lying under the ashes—stemming from Israeli intransigence backed by the United States and from negative U.S. positions on Arab issues will burn and destroy everything should it flare up one day. Perhaps the lesson that should not be lost to decisionmakers in Washington is that it was continuous pressure on the Palestinian people that led to the eruption of the intifadah in the Palestinian territories. We would not be exaggerating if we say that the next intifadah in the Arab homeland will be aimed against the United States and its interests in the region if it continues to disillusion the Arabs and deride the feelings of the masses. Human issues always have precedence over other issues. The practice of provocative policies by the United States deprives it and the Arab leaders of credibility, strengthens the Arab peoples' resolve, and provides them with renewed potential to struggle against anything American. [passage omitted]

Islamic Jihad Said Training Youths for Suicide Attacks

TA0803181795 *Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic* 1700 GMT 8 Mar 95

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian Police recently detained two residents of Gaza City's al-Shaja'iyah neighborhood. Their names are Na'im al-Dardasi and Ayman Muhammadin.

During a news conference held in Gaza City today, with the participation of Palestinian security officers, the two teenagers said that after undergoing brainwashing, they were trained by Islamic Jihad members to carry out suicide operations in Israel. Our correspondent Hasan Abu-Zayid reports that the police released the two after they expressed their regret in the presence of their fathers.

Algeria

Dembri on Election Plans, Upcoming Summit, NPT

MM0803144995 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 8 Mar 95 pp 1, 4

[Interview with Foreign Minister Mohamed Salah Dembri by Sawsan Abu-Husayn in Copenhagen; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Abu-Husayn] Algeria has announced that it will hold presidential elections before the end of the year, while violent operations continue to escalate. What is your opinion?

[Dembri] The issue of holding the presidential elections is an irrevocable political plan, and they will be held before the end of the year. We also attach importance to the continuation of the national political dialogue, proceeding from the principle of opening the door to all political energies in Algeria in order to participate in defining future horizons for Algerian society. We acknowledge the existence of violent operations. But the government is trying to move out of this cycle, and it will surmount all these difficulties in the coming months. We believe that the violence phenomenon is not part of our country's traditions. It is alien to it and imposed on us.

[Abu-Husayn] Are there new results as regards agreeing on national dialogue ideas in Algeria?

[Dembri] We encourage any ideas that safeguard adherence to the 1989 Constitution, that is adopting pluralism, power rotation, and respecting sovereignty, in order to build democracy.

[Abu-Husayn] Does President Zeroual intend to run in the next elections?

[Dembri] The electoral program has been announced, and all its aspects are known. Every citizen is entitled to run in the elections, provided he meets legal requirements.

[Abu-Husayn] Is President Zeroual expected to meet with French President Mitterrand on the sidelines of the summit's [social development summit] proceedings?

[Dembri] Nothing prevents such a meeting being held, especially as the causes of the differences have been eliminated, now that Paris has stressed that media services contributed to straining the atmosphere between the two countries. Algeria is an independent sovereign state, and we reject foreign interference. Apart from this, we believe there is no reason for disagreements with world states. So we can say that relations with Paris are cordial at present.

[Abu-Husayn] What are the issues to which Algeria is devoting the greatest interest in this international meeting?

[Dembri] Algeria is very interested in this conference, because it tackles so-called restructuring in the world, that is, fair development. We, and many other societies, have not yet gotten ready to enter the new world economy market. We also have problems in terms of coordination with the IMF. And we sometimes face numerous difficulties—which affects the social situation in our country. All this requires solidarity from human societies and world states for the sake of coordination.

[Abu-Husayn] That means that Algeria believes that economic conditions are among the causes of extremism.

[Dembri] Certainly Algeria has never been an extremist state. We have not raised this issue at the conference. However, we believe that improving economic conditions and employment opportunities and fighting unemployment help to build a united society that respects all components of the national identity, and to end all aspects of violence.

[Abu-Husayn] What are the motives behind President Zeroual's participation in this conference?

[Dembri] We believe it is an important international occasion in view of the presence of over 100 heads of state and government. We also have numerous proposals concerning North-South relations and the possibility of improving dialogue and enriching economic exchange in the framework of common interests.

[Abu-Husayn] Algeria announced recently its agreement to sign the extension of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT]. What does this position mean?

[Dembri] We announced qualified agreement and defined the position very clearly, first and foremost the condition that Israel join the treaty. This position enjoys Arab consensus. I would like also to point out that Algeria was the last state to join the treaty.

As for the extension of the treaty, we make it conditional that Israel sign it—which strengthens Arab solidarity. Algeria also espouses the arms control issue at this international conference, so that we can spend all the money on economic development.

Egypt

U.S. Secretary Christopher Arrives in Cairo

NC0803181495 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1800 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 8 Mar (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa conferred this evening with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher at the latter's residence in Cairo. Christopher arrived here earlier today on a two-day visit to Egypt at the start of his shuttle trip to the region to activate the peace process.

Musa on Meeting With Christopher

NC0803200295 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1845 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A short while ago Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa concluded a meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who arrived in Cairo

today. During the meeting they discussed ways of promoting the peace talks on the Syrian and Palestinian tracks, as well as Israel's nuclear program and Egypt's stance on the renewal of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT].

Asked if Secretary Christopher is bringing any new ideas on his current tour of the region to reactivate the Palestinian and Syrian tracks and to persuade Israel to fulfill its obligations, Musa said:

[Begin recording] [Musa] I believe that Secretary Christopher has brought several ideas and a certain diplomatic activity to revitalize the peace process.

[Unidentified correspondent] Has the United States begun to understand Egypt's concern over Israel's nuclear capability?

[Musa] I believe so. I believe the Egyptian stance is now completely understood and appreciated in many world capitals, including the United States. We do not threaten and we have no quarrel with the NPT but we want the term "universal" called for by the United States to be indeed universal, but universal minus [preceding word in english] one is not good. This is very clear. [end recording]

More on Musa's Remarks

NC0803215295 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2005 GMT
8 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 8 Mar (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has said that Egypt plays a major role in the Middle East peace process because peace is a major factor in Egypt's foreign policy. Musa made this statement this evening following his meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who is currently visiting Egypt.

Asked about the dispute between Egypt and Israel over the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT] and its effect on the Egyptian role in the peace process, Musa asked: Is Egypt supposed to accept the excuses of the other countries in order to preserve its role? He noted that Egypt's relations with Israel are good and allow Egypt to continue its role in the regional peace process on the basis of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and the land for peace principle.

The foreign minister reiterated that Egypt is seeking to develop its ties with all the region's countries and that it intervenes whenever there is a difference in views among the parties concerned in the peace process.

On the U.S. secretary of state's trip to the region, Musa said that this visit is of particular importance, in terms of its substance and timing, in view of the serious situation on the Syrian-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli tracks of the peace process, and as far as Israel's nuclear program is concerned. He noted that his talks with Christopher had not dealt with the question of Israel's nuclear program. In this regard, Musa stressed that there are no disputes

between Egypt and the United States over the NPT. The problem, he added, is between Egypt and Israel over the latter's nuclear program, which is beyond the control of the international system.

Regarding the Egyptian proposals to overcome the problems obstructing the renewal of the NPT, the foreign minister said that Egypt had put forward proposals to overcome these problems. He noted that these proposals are now being discussed with the Israelis, considering that the NPT concerns all the regional countries, not a specific party, and makes no exceptions. Musa added that the success of Christopher's current tour is important for the United States, for Egypt, and for the peace process.

Musa added that Egypt will continue its exchanges with Israel, the United States, the Europeans, and the other parties on the NPT. He underlined Egypt's firm position and stressed that Egypt cannot commit itself to something from which Israel is excluded. He added that the question of the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons concerns Egypt's national security, which gives it utmost priority. He added: There are no U.S. threats or pressure on Egypt in this regard, but there is an extremely serious discussion between the two states as friends. He expressed his belief that it is possible to reach a workable solution to this problem. He noted that the United States fully understands the Egyptian stance, as do the other world states, because the Egyptian stance does not conflict with the NPT. He pointed out that the universality called for by the United States requires that no country be exempted.

Musa denied that the United States had hinted it would halt its aid to Egypt. He also denied that Egypt had set a deadline for Israel to reply on its position regarding the NPT. He added that Egypt will take its final stand when the time comes for renewing the treaty, in order to give all the region's countries an opportunity to make the necessary progress, on the basis of which the final stand of all the region's countries will crystallize.

The foreign minister noted that Secretary Christopher had come to the region with many ideas and intensive diplomatic activity to activate the peace process. He stressed that Egypt is interested in the continuation of the U.S. role in promoting the peace process since Washington is an honest sponsor of this process.

Mubarak-Christopher News Conference

NC0903165795 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1020 GMT
9 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 9 Mar (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has announced that the entire region should be purged of weapons of mass destruction if we seek an all-embracing peace. At a news conference he held with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in Cairo this morning, President Mubarak reiterated that Egypt has not changed its position on signing the Nuclear

Nonproliferation Treaty. He pointed out that this issue is currently being discussed with Israel to reach a solution to the problem.

The president added that his talks with Christopher today discussed several issues of mutual interest, including the Middle East peace process and the efforts being exerted on the Syrian, Lebanese, and Palestinian tracks. Mubarak said: We stressed the need to make progress in this connection without delay and discussed the issue of eliminating weapons of mass destruction from the region.

Speaking at the news conference attended by Secretary Christopher, Mubarak said: I am looking forward to meeting U.S. President Bill Clinton in Washington early next month.

The president described Egyptian-U.S. relations as excellent and very strong, adding that no problem that emerges in any region affects these relations. We always overcome these problems; no one can destroy our relations, he said.

The president added: We have relations with Israel. We seek to achieve an all-embracing peace in the region. As far as signing the nuclear treaty is concerned, Israel must have a timetable or something of the sort for eliminating weapons of mass destruction, Mubarak said.

The president pointed out that the outstanding differences with Israel in this connection are being discussed right now. He said he hoped the peace process will move ahead and that progress will be made on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher described Egyptian-U.S. relations as more than excellent. He noted that Egypt, Israel, and the United States are working together to achieve regional peace. He pointed out that relations among these three states are very important and vital for regional peace. He added that each of these three states needs this three-sided relationship.

Christopher said he was pleased that President Mubarak accepted President Clinton's invitation to a meeting in Washington early next month.

Responding to correspondents' questions on whether the gap in Egyptian-U.S. positions on signing the nuclear treaty has been narrowed, Christopher pointed out that it is not a question of differences between Egypt and the United States. He added that there are negotiations and that viewpoints are being exchanged on the issue.

Christopher added that Egypt has a distinctive role in this regard. He referred to the visit the U.S. vice president is due to pay to Egypt in mid-April. He noted the importance of that visit for developing economic ties and carrying out existing projects that serve both countries' interests.

Following are the minutes of the international news conference President Hosni Mubarak and U.S. Secretary

of State Warren Christopher held following their meeting that lasted for 2 and a half hours:

At the beginning of the news conference, President Mubarak made a short statement, in which he expressed his pleasure at meeting with the U.S. secretary of state. Mubarak welcomed Christopher, noting that they discussed a number of issues of mutual interest, including developments in the Middle East peace process, particularly on the Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese tracks.

The president said: Our impression is that there is a pressing need to rejuvenate the peace process and give it momentum. Time is very important and we have to make our utmost to consolidate available chances and make tangible progress without delay. We rely on the active role the United States will play in the coming weeks and months.

Mubarak added: We discussed also our determination to make the Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction. In this context, we discussed the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, which was the focus of media attention recently. I would like to point out the Egyptian viewpoint on this matter clearly. We are members in this important treaty and we want to extend this treaty in order to maintain world peace and security. We also want to enhance consciousness of this treaty. We have a specific regional concern as far as the Israeli nuclear program is concerned. We believe that this Egyptian concern should be seriously taken into consideration. We urge Israel to take the necessary steps to make the Middle East free of nuclear weapons, as well as other weapons of mass destruction.

Mubarak added: This is the ideal guarantee for achieving security for all regional people. We are negotiating Israel on this matter at present. We hope Israel will soon take a position on the issue. Our goal is to take the entire region to a new era of balanced security and stability that involves us all.

President Mubarak asked Secretary Christopher to convey his best regards to U.S. President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore, who will come to Egypt on 19 March. I am looking forward to meeting U.S. President Bill Clinton in Washington early next month, Mubarak said.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher made a statement, in which he thanked President Mubarak and expressed his pleasure at returning to Cairo and having the chance to hold consultations with President Mubarak. I believe that this is my 12th visit to the region since I held the post of secretary of state, he said; adding: It is no coincidence that I always visit Cairo at the beginning of my Middle East tours. I was given the chance to do that this time as well, he said.

Christopher added that over the past 20 years, Egypt has undertaken the leadership role in the Arab world in the process of achieving an all-embracing peace. He noted

that last month President Mubarak hosted a quadripartite summit that was followed by a four-way ministerial meeting in Washington with the participation of the United States. He affirmed that those two meetings reflected Mubarak's vision of how to consolidate the peace process.

The U.S. secretary affirmed at the news conference that Egypt is the United States' full partner in the peace process. This reality will be reflected by the visit U.S. Vice President Al Gore will pay to Egypt soon, as well as by the visit President Mubarak will make to Washington next month to meet with President Clinton, Christopher said.

He added: This will allow us and the American people to give President Mubarak a full welcome and demonstrate our warm and friendly sentiments toward the Egyptian people.

Christopher pointed out that his talks with President Mubarak reflected full agreement on the pressing need to stir the peace process on all the tracks. We are not undermining the challenges facing the peace process; we are aware of and admit that some progress has been achieved. But we need to do our utmost to seize the historic opportunity available to us at present, he said.

Christopher added that the key to both the Palestinian and Syrian tracks is for both sides to realize and recognize the opposite side's needs. The Palestinians have to double their efforts to fight terrorism and present those responsible for it to justice. Under such circumstances, Israel can reiterate its commitment to redeploy the Israeli troops and hold the Palestinian elections, he said.

As for the Syrian track, Christopher said that both Syria and Israel must seize this available opportunity to move ahead and make the difficult decisions. He added that it is necessary for both sides to engage in negotiations soon, seize this opportunity, and make progress to speed up a settlement because the time is favorable right now.

Christopher continued: This is the way we can help. We hope these efforts and negotiations will produce something.

The U.S. secretary added: We held important talks today about the nonproliferation treaty. President Mubarak understands the importance President Clinton and the United States attach to the extension of that treaty. We as well understand Egypt's concern in this connection, he said.

He added that there is an obvious agreement on two strategic points. The first, as President Mubarak has noted, is that Egypt and America view the treaty as pivotal and central for world peace and security. The second point is that we agree on the need to discuss this matter together and cooperate in a manner that consolidates the existing Egyptian-American partnership.

Christopher added: I would like to point out a number of important points. Egypt, the United States, and Israel constitute the cornerstone in the Middle East peace process. Relations between them are central and they create an historic opportunity to arrive at a comprehensive peace.

The U.S. secretary of state added that he and President Mubarak agree that the three states—Egypt, the United States, and Israel—must build a strong structure to lay a good foundation for the future.

Replying to a question on Egyptian-U.S. relations and differences in viewpoints on some issues, Warren Christopher said that relations between the two states are excellent. We go back a long way. Nothing shows that better than the fact that Cairo is always the first stop in my Middle East tours, he said. He added that U.S. Vice President Al Gore will visit Cairo soon and that President Mubarak will begin a visit to Washington during the first week of next month. This reflects the good relations linking Egypt and the United States, he said.

We are working together closely to find solutions for some difficult problems that face us, Christopher said.

President Mubarak commented by saying that Egyptian-U.S. relations are very strong. Viewpoints differ on some issues sometimes. But this does not mean that the deep-rooted relations that exist between us will be shaken. We can discuss any differences and we normally reach a solution. I assure you that relations between Egypt and the United States are so strong that nobody can ruin them no matter what, Mubarak affirmed.

Commentary Views U.S. Efforts

NC0903050495 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio
Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 8 Mar 95

[Commentary by 'Atif 'Umar: "Will Christopher Achieve Real progress Toward Breaking the Current Stalemate in the Middle East?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It is inconceivable that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's current tour of the Middle East will be unproductive and fail to promote the peace efforts or bridge the points of view on the issues that have recently exploded in the region, especially the removing weapons of mass destruction from the Middle East. All evidence indicates that there is a wide gap between the Arab and Israelis views on this issue.

Although the Arabs have taken the initiative toward peace and although several Arab states have continuously made many concessions to break the current stalemate in the peace process caused by endless Israeli demands, it is both astonishing and strange for Israel to persist in its intransigence and to claim that Pakistan's possession of nuclear weapons poses a threat to its security, despite the great distance between the two countries and despite the fact that Pakistan's nuclear

installations are under direct UN supervision. History shows that Pakistan did not intervene directly or indirectly in the four wars the Arabs waged in defense of the Palestinian homeland occupied by the Israeli forces. This proves that Pakistan's possession of nuclear weapons poses no threat to Israel's security. Israel is using this threat as a kind of smokescreen to conceal facts which are difficult to conceal.

As for Iraq, whose its military and nonmilitary installations have been destroyed, no state has claimed that Iraq poses a danger or a threat to it, especially a state like Israel which closely studies the data sent by U.S. space satellites orbiting over Iraq and other countries. Therefore, Israel knows the plight of Iraq, which has fallen into miserable conditions since it fell into the trap of the great international conspiracy to destroy it and the Iraqi people's resources.

By all standards, the Arabs have offered a lot for the sake of establishing a real and permanent peace with Israel. The Egypt-Israel, PLO-Israel, and Jordan-Israel agreements recognize Israel as a state with full political rights even though Israel has yet to define its geographical borders. These agreements are a clear message to the U.S. side and to all external forces who speak about the importance of peace in the Middle East and call for flexibility to help this peace.

These demands should not be addressed to the Arab side because Arab credibility has been proved by actual Arab behavior despite the wrong practices of Israel. One of these wrong practices is the blockade Israel has imposed on the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, depriving them of their livelihood and of any prospects for the future, be it bitter or sweet.

Arab demands that Israel sign the NPT truly express a serious desire for a permanent peace devoid of threats or anxiety. The mere presence of this threat and the resulting anxiety will rip apart the people's support for their leaders in the march to the full and just peace that ensures mutual peace and security for the Arab and Israeli sides.

We reject the claim that the Israeli public is putting pressure on their government to reject any commitments counter to its objectives in the region—objectives which do have a certain limit—because the Arab people who have rallied around their leadership in search of an equitable peace can at any moment become a tidal wave of anger against Israel and its people, especially if the Arabs feel endangered or threatened.

If the Arab people have shown their civility by extending their hand for a just peace out of a conviction that it is important for all the peoples of the region to join in shaping the future, they also reject all forms of pressure, regardless of its sources, on the basis that Arab security, with Egypt as its main rampart, permits no compromises or bargaining.

We hope that the U.S. Administration is aware of these facts, especially after a report in the French weekly *JEUNE AFRIQUE* has stated that the whole U.S. strategy in this vital region will be threatened unless the United States intervenes positively to resolve the issue of Israel's refusal to sign the NPT. According to the magazine, this issue has put the United States in an unenviable situation.

Paper on Christopher Tour, Israeli Nuclear Power

NC0903113395 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 1 Mar 95 p 1

[Editorial by Chief Editor Jalal Duwaydar: "Full Partner and Not a Role of a Mailman"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It is not enough for Washington to declare every now and then that it is a full partner in the peace-making process in the Middle East only to find ourselves surprised by the fact that its role is no more than a mailman. Aspirers to a genuine peace in the Middle East miss a positive role by the United States because its negative stance has led to the Israeli intransigence and insistence on refusing to respond positively to the international resolutions and principles of fairness. Whatever the case, we must not give in to the power of the Zionist lobby, which extends to all U.S. decision-making centers. This lobby uses all legal and illegal means to prevent the United States from siding with justice, right, legitimacy, and even from being neutral.

Washington is ready to exert pressure on and make threats against even its friends, but it stands totally impotent before the Israeli influence. This stance caused a stalemate in the peace process as a natural result of Tel Aviv's attempts to impose the solutions that it wants. Therefore, we maintain that establishing peace and ensuring its requirements is basically linked to the seriousness of the U.S. role. All that the United States is required to do is to act in line with its long-term interests and convince Israel that genuine peace is in the interest of all parties and that peace in the Middle East can only be established in accordance with the land-for-peace principle, which Egypt advocates supported by the world.

Another point, among others, that draws attention is that Washington has not as yet publicly disclosed its views on the issue of Israel's stance on the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty [NPT]. This stance reveals the embarrassing situation in which Washington finds itself because of its support for the NPT while its attitude shows that Israel is a privileged country and is allowed not to sign. I really feel sorry for U.S. Secretary of State Christopher, who exhausts himself and is taking the trouble to travel once again to the Middle East next week—we thank him for his efforts—to try to advance the peace efforts. To make things crystal clear, I maintain that I do not expect this trip to achieve any success, nor do I expect that the tripartite summit between him, Rabin, and 'Arafat to result in anything to save the peace process. Until the United States puts its interests and peace and stability in the Middle East before the Israeli interests, the U.S. Secretary of State's role will not be more than that of

mailman. If the U.S. efforts continue in this state of stalemate and negativity, the hope for the Middle East to emerge from its whirl of conflicts will be far away.

'Militants' Kill Imam in South

NC0803223095 Paris AFP in English 2139 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Al-Minya, Egypt, March 8 (AFP)—Islamic militants shot and killed the imam of a mosque in the troubled al-Minya region of southern Egypt Wednesday [8 March], police said.

The gunmen opened fire as Ahmad Mustafa 'Abd-al-Rahman, 45, was getting ready to go home after leading a prayer service at the mosque near the town of Mallawi, 250 kilometres (155 miles) south of Cairo. He was hit in the chest and stomach.

Police said the gunmen fled the scene after the attack.

The victim's wife said the two killers were members of the outlawed al-Jama'a al-Islamiyah fundamentalist group who wanted to take control of the mosque.

The imam's death raised to 672 the number of people killed in unrest since the militants launched a violent anti-government campaign in March 1992.

Libya

Unity Committee Urges League Meeting on Lebanon

LD0803122295 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1118 GMT
8 Mar 95

[Statement by "a source at the General People's Committee for Unity"; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Israeli enemy is continuing its criminal aggression against the people, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Lebanon in defiance of the Arab nation and the international community, ignoring all the international covenants and resolutions which condemn the Israelis and demand their withdrawal from occupied Arab territories, including Resolution 425 which was passed over 17 years ago. The Israelis' Western allies, however, have not attempted to bind them to implementing or even merely recognizing these resolutions. [passage omitted]

The General People's Committee for Unity urges the Arab nation and Arab governments to meet immediately, and adhere to the provisions of the Arab accords, particularly the Joint Arab Defense Pact, to repulse the aggression, confront the enemy, and support the brotherly Lebanese people who are being exposed to killing, destruction, blockade, and starvation.

The Great Jamahiriyyah's stance and its pan-Arab responsibility make it imperative for it to call for the convening of the Arab League Council and the Council of the Joint Arab Defense Pact in order to confront the threat and repulse the aggression. The Great Jamahiriyyah refuses to yield to submission, believes that the Arab nation is capable of confronting its enemies and protecting its existence, and puts all its capabilities at the disposal of Lebanon and its Arab people so that they may defend themselves.

Shame will befall the Arab nation, as it watches one of its parts being (?destroyed by war), while the Arabs are incapable of making the decisions that the situation dictates in order to confront aggression, as stipulated in Arab accords.

Bahrain**Interior Ministry Detains 'Subversive' Group**

JN0903093495 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0600 GMT
9 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 9 Mar (WAKH)—The ceaseless efforts and intensive investigations of the Public Security organizations have revealed the reality and dimensions of a subversive plan. They have uncovered subversive groups whose elements will be put on trial. These efforts led to the rounding up of a group that engaged in riots, arson, and acts of vandalism in Jidd Hafs and neighboring areas. Between the time the riots erupted and the group's member were arrested, they deliberately set fire to a Post Office building, a power generator in Jidd Hafs and another generator in al-Diraz, the offices of the Bahrain Fairs' administration in Sanabis, and the Karranah oil station.

A Bahraini Interior Ministry statement, published in Manama today, said members of this group include: Mahmud Muhsin 'Ali Muhammad al-Siba', 28, carpenter; Husayn Yusuf Ahamd al-Saffar, 26, operator; Ja'far Muhammad Kazim Nasir, 21, janitor; Hamzah 'Abd-al-Rasul 'Ali Ahmad, 25, student; and Hasan 'Ali Habib Muhammad Mubarak, 21, university student.

The group's members made important and full confessions to the investigating judge who ordered that they be held in custody pending appearing in court. Their confessions revealed instigated and premeditated crimes with illegitimate goals, designed to undermine stability and security in the country, and to intimidate the people.

The group's members confessed that at approximately 0210 on 31 January 1995 they stormed the offices of the Bahrain Fairs' administration at Sanabis area, broke furniture, poured oil on it, and used incendiary bombs to sett it ablaze.

They also confessed that at 0150 on 26 February 1995 they went to the Karranah oil station, wearing masks and armed with sharp instruments. They beat a worker, spilled oil, threw incendiary bombs, and set the station ablaze.

They also confessed that at dawn on 28 February 1995 they stormed the Jidd Hafs' Post Office building, broke and damaged its contents, and set it ablaze. They admitted they stole gas cylinders from the al-Fardan gas store in the Jidd Hafs area and blew them up near the al-Hashimi complex. They also confessed that they set fire to a power generator in the same area and another generator in the al-Diraz area, set fire to and broke traffic lights and lampposts, pelted public security men with incendiary bombs and stones, and distributed pamphlets.

The group's members confessed to the investigating judge that the group was formed, and the arson and acts of vandalism carried out, on the orders of 'Abd-al-Hadi 'Abdallah Mahdi Hasan, 27, a bookshop owner who lives in the Sanabis area.

A responsible source at the Interior Ministry confirmed that the public security organizations, inspired by their duty and enthusiasm about boosting the country's security, want to reaffirm that they will not deal leniently with those who commit acts of vandalism, arson, or who riots with the aim of undermining stability. They also stress that saboteurs and extremists will not escape justice. They said they will press ahead with their extensive efforts and will enforce stringent security measures to implement the law and ensure that security and tranquility prevail throughout the country.

Kuwait**Interior Ministry: 20 Iraqis Arrested by Coast Guard**

LD0703185195 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1832 GMT
7 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kuwait City, 7 Mar (KUNA)—The Kuwaiti Interior Ministry has announced that it has arrested 20 Iraqi infiltrators in the northern region of Kuwait. In a statement released today, the Ministry says that "coastguard patrols arrested the infiltrators who were aboard a boat in the northern region" of the country.

The Ministry adds that the 20 Iraqi infiltrators, who included "6 children, 6 men, and 8 women," have been referred to the competent authorities for questioning.

Minister on Cooperation in World Trade Center Case

LD0803151395 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1342 GMT
8 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Kuwait, 8 Mar (KUNA)—Interior Minister Shaykh 'Ali Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah has said that the Kuwaiti security services are continuing their efforts to supply all information on Ramzi Yusuf, a defendant in the case of the 1993 blowing up of the New York World Trade Center in 1993, who is currently under arrest in the United States for investigation.

In a statement distributed here, Shaykh 'Ali al-Sabah said that the information available to the Kuwaiti security authorities shows that the defendant was a resident in Kuwait before the invasion and was able to flee Kuwait during the liberation war, with many people who collaborated with the Iraqi occupation authorities.

He also said that the Kuwaiti security services are making their utmost efforts to cooperate permanently and continuously with all the international organizations and services concerned with antiterrorism, using all (?means), in order to eliminate those elements who aim at harming innocents everywhere in the world.

The blowing up of the New York World Trade Center killed about six people and injured hundreds of others. After the incident, Ramzi Yusuf fled the United States

but he was arrested in Pakistan last month and sent to New York to be tried on the charges levelled against him.

United Arab Emirates

Minister Calls For Repricing Oil, Raw Materials

JN0903132995 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0800 GMT 9 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Al-Shariqah, 9 Mar (WAKH)—Ahmad al-Tayir, minister of state for financial and industrial affairs in the United Arab Emirates [UAE], has called on Gulf Cooperation Council states to hold a meeting of finance and oil ministers to confront the abnormal conditions imposed by the industrial countries on the oil-exporting countries. He stressed that current conditions cannot be regarded as normal or fair.

In statements published today by the UAE newspaper AL-KHALIG, al-Tayir noted that it is about time to reprice raw materials, including oil, in order to protect the exporting countries' national economies from abrupt fluctuations in world markets, especially as regards currencies.

He stressed the need to raise oil prices to a fixed price that should not decrease. He noted that this should be done gradually so we can obtain a fair price that would compensate these countries and restrain the decline in the exports' revenues. He said this would also check the rise in the imports' bill resulting from the fact that oil is priced according to one currency, that is, the dollar.

Al-Tayir said pricing raw materials can be done by assessing these materials according to a basket of currencies that reflects the size of these countries' exports to and imports from industrialized countries like Japan, the United States, and Europe, or by valuing the exports of developing countries, including oil-exporting countries, by the currencies of the countries importing raw materials, provided that raw materials are priced on the basis of currencies' value before the latest slump in stock markets.

He said developing countries, especially the oil-producing ones, have the right to seek alternatives to protect their national economies, noting that the current situation in the world's stock markets has negative repercussions for countries that export raw materials. He said these countries have no option except to sell raw materials for a currency that suffers a sharp decline against other major currencies at a time when these countries import industrialized materials and necessary

commodities with strong currencies. Therefore, he added, these countries incur added losses, whether as regards exports' revenues or the imports' expenses.

Yemen

Cabinet Endorses Saudi Memo of Understanding

JN0803130795 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The cabinet held an ordinary session this morning under Prime Minister 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abd-al-Ghani. At the outset, the prime minister congratulated the cabinet members and Yemeni people on the blessed 'Id al-Fitr. He stressed the need for continued efforts to resolve citizens' problems and ease the burden of the economic crisis the country is experiencing. This can be done by implementing the government's policy statement and the comments of the House of Representatives on this statement.

The prime minister asked the ministers to present an integral view of the necessary reforms in light of the government's statement in the economic, financial, and administrative aspects. This is meant to speed up work and production in all state agencies. The prime minister emphasized the need for punctuality and commitment to official working hours by all employees, primarily administrative leaders, who should set an example for others. In this regard, the cabinet reviewed a report by the brother minister of civil service and administrative reform on attendance and absenteeism after the 'Id al-Fitr holiday. The cabinet decided to adopt the proposed measures against the absentees.

The cabinet then listened to a report presented by brother 'Abd- al-Qadir Ba-Jammal, deputy prime minister and minister of planning and development, on the talks held recently in Saudi Arabia between delegations of the two fraternal countries. The talks resulted in signing a memorandum of understanding. The cabinet endorsed the memorandum of understanding signed in Mecca between the Republic of Yemen and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on Sunday, 27 Ramadan 1415 Hegira, corresponding to 26 February 1995.

The cabinet expressed satisfaction with the sincere fraternal spirit that dominated the talks between the two sides. It expressed hope that bilateral relations will be promoted to serve the interests of the two fraternal peoples. The cabinet also hoped that the signing of this memorandum will be a right beginning to resolve all issues of interest to the two neighborly countries. It highly praised and valued the efforts made by the Yemeni delegation during its talks with its counterparts from the fraternal Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Nuclear Expert Allegedly Assassinated in Greece

MM0803152395 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 8 Mar 95 pp 1, 4

[Report by Walid Abi-Murshid: "Iraqi Nuclear Expert Disappears in Greece"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London—A reliable Iraqi source in Cyprus has revealed to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that a second Iraqi nuclear expert has been assassinated in Greece in an operation similar to the assassination of his colleague Dr. Mu'ayyad al-Janabi in Amman last year.

The Iraqi source stresses that the new victim is a nuclear expert who held a prominent position in the Iraqi Military Industrialization Organization, and that he worked directly under Husayn Kamil Hasan, President Saddam Husayn's son-in-law, current military industrialization minister and former defense minister.

The Iraqi source says that the nuclear scientist, whose name he declined to reveal, took shelter in Zakho, which is under Kurdish control in northern Iraq, after Major General Wafiq al-Samarra'i took refuge there. He had on him very important secret documents on the stages reached in Iraqi nuclear development plans since the end of the Gulf war and under the continued international inspection of Iraqi installations. The nuclear expert moved from Zakho to Turkey, from where he sailed to Greece illegally.

On the night of 27/28 February this expert disappeared completely. It was learned later that he had been abducted from a location near Athens international airport.

The source in question says that the abduction operation was coordinated with Iraqi quarters in Athens and it was carried out with the help of an Iraqi security group that had arrived in Greece.

The source adds that the abduction operation was carried out so meticulously that it was not detected by the Greek authorities, which had no official information about the Iraqi scientist's entry into their territory. The source stresses that Iraqi security services consider it one of the most successful operations launched to eliminate "breakaway" elements—specifically more successful than the Amman operation which claimed the life of Dr. Mu'ayyad al-Janabi.

The Iraqi source says that the complete secrecy in which the abduction and elimination operations were conducted was prompted by the delicate circumstances surrounding Baghdad's campaign to ease the international sanctions imposed on it, especially as Rolf Ekeus, chairman of the international inspection committee, was visiting Baghdad to prepare a new report on the extent of the Iraqi authorities' compliance with the UN resolutions, and the Security Council is preparing to review these sanctions.

Opposition Continues Reportage on Military Operations**PUK: 70 Iraqi Soldiers Defect**

JN0803124895 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1215 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK], led by Jalal Talabani, has issued statement saying that clashes have continued in Iraqi Kurdistan. The PUK said regular Iraqi Forces yesterday strafed, with helicopters, several Kurdish positions of the PUK and the Unified Iraqi National Congress on the border of Iraqi Kurdistan.

The PUK statement notes that the helicopters of the Iraqi Army strafed a position affiliated with Kurdish rebels near Chamchamal, on the road between Karkuk, which is under the control of the Army, and al-Sulaymaniyah, which is under the control of Kurdish rebels. The statement adds that tanks were used in the fierce clashes which took place. The PUK statement says the Kurdish fighters and their allies from the Iraqi National Congress were able to defeat the regular Iraqi Forces in (Juwayr), northwest of Irbil, and to seize a number of artillery guns and large amounts of light weapons and ammunitions. The statement adds that approximately 70 soldiers joined the opposition forces.

Battle Situation in North Updated

LD0803143795 London Iraqi Broadcasting Corporation Press Release in English 1247 GMT 8 Mar 95

[Received by fax]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Salah al-Din, Iraq (8 March)—The following is a summary of situation reports received from various IBC [Iraqi Broadcasting Corporation] correspondents in northern Iraq on Tuesday, 7 March:

Please note: we caution that the information we are receiving is sporadic and fragmented due to the fact that the situation inside Iraq is constantly changing.

1. According to an IBC correspondent, the forces loyal to the Iraqi National Congress [INC] overwhelmed a detachment of the 38th division of the 5th army corps near Gweir at dawn on Tuesday 7 March.

2. The regime, which had pushed forces from the Al-Abd detachment of the Republican Guards into the area, failed to win back control of the situation and sustained losses after its counter-attack failed. The regime forces were routed and an armoured personnel carrier and 2 vehicles carrying dushka mortars were destroyed.

3. The INC forces captured eight 122 mm infantry howitzers (field guns), a large quantity of ammunition, 3 vehicles carrying dushka-type mortars, 5 dushka mortars, hundreds of machine guns, light weapons and a large quantity of other equipment.

4. During the attack by the INC, over 70 men, both officers and ordinary soldiers defected from the regime's detachment, joining the INC troops. In addition, individuals from the second and third battalions of the 848th brigade of the 5th army corps joined the ranks of the INC.

5. Four of the regimes helicopters attacked Kara Hanjir (12 kilometres from the centre of Karkuk governate) for one hour on Tuesday beginning at 1600 local time.

6. The regime's forces used heavy artillery to shell the outskirts of the city of Arbil for four hours on Tuesday 7 March. The shelling hit the Shamama, Malcha and Auwanina areas of the city.

PUK Claims 40 Troops Captured

NC0803154395 Paris AFP in English 1452 GMT 8 Mar 95

[By Tolle Aram]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Salah al-Din, Iraq, March 8 (AFP)—At least 10 Kurdish fighters have been killed and 30 other people injured in clashes between the opposition and the army of President Saddam Husayn, Kurdish officials said Wednesday [8 March].

The 30 injured in fighting since Saturday on the edge of a Kurdish safe haven in northern Iraq included civilians, said Faraydun 'Abd-al-Qader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK).

He said 40 Iraqi troops were captured and would be handed over to the opposition coalition Iraqi National Congress (INC).

The PUK, INC and smaller Kurdish factions have attacked Iraqi government troops with the avowed aim of triggering a country-wide uprising against Saddam.

The Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), a rival of the PUK and which stood back from the clashes, said at least 13 Kurdish militiamen were killed.

Iraq confirmed fighting with the PUK on Sunday night. It said its army drove back a PUK attack, causing several casualties among the Kurds.

But Baghdad denies opposition reports that it has been massing troops on the edge of the safe haven and shelling Kurdish towns.

The PUK and KDP have together controlled a large swathe of northern Iraq in defiance of Baghdad and with allied protection since an uprising after the 1991 Gulf War.

But since May the two factions have been locked in a conflict over power-sharing and tax revenue that has resulted in 2,000 deaths.

A visit to Guer, southwest of the town of Irbil and on the edge of the Kurdish region, showed no sign of heavy fighting. Only captured machine-guns and small artillery were on display.

A resident told AFP: "No civilians have died or been injured here so far. People in this area leave their villages at night and come back during the day to work on their fields."

Since the clashes erupted the price of petrol has however soared from two Iraqi dinars a litre to 20 dinars. The average monthly income in northern Iraq is 300 dinars.

"Saddam has simply cut off the smuggling of petrol. Why shouldn't he since the Kurds are attacking him," a garage owner said in Irbil.

Kurdish Movement Issues 'Standby' Orders

NC0803154695 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1525 GMT 8 Mar 95

[Unscheduled bulletin]

[FBIS Translated Text] From 'Abd-al-Wahid al-Fayli, secretary of the Muslim Kurdish al-Fayliyun Movement to all our organizations in Khanaqin, Jalula', Shahraban, (Kazraba'), Baghdad, Badrah, Jafan, al-Kut, 'Ali al-Sharqi, 'Ali al-Gharbi, Shaykh Sa'd, and Kuwait: Be on standby. Await our coming instructions.

Division Commander Reportedly Joins 'Opposition'

NC0803155795 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1440 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The number of senior Army officers who are joining the Iraqi opposition as the crisis being suffered by Saddam's regime continues is increasing.

Iraqi sources in northern Iraq said a senior officer, Commander of the Iraqi Army's Fifth Division Muhammad Kawani, has joined the Iraqi opposition. The officer is a relative of criminal Saddam Kamil, an in-law of tyrant Saddam.

This officer revealed details of the murder of foreign correspondents in Iraqi Kurdistan by regime agents. The sources said the last female foreign correspondent [words indistinct] is German named [words indistinct]. She was killed by [words indistinct].

PUK Attack on 'Enemy' Position Reported

NC0803161795 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1520 GMT 8 Mar 95

[Unscheduled announcement]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ladies and gentlemen: We have just received the following report from the Kifri-Jingabad combat line: In view of the Iraqi regime's preparations for a surprise attack against the City of Kifri and its surroundings, following the enemy's bombardment of the city and its inhabitants with heavy artillery and mortars at 2100 on the night of 7-8 March, in a bid to foil the 'Aflaqite regime's plans to occupy the

liberated areas, a heroic force from the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] at 2215 made a sudden attack on the positions and assembly points of the regime's troops on the hills of Rahim Warqa and ('Ali Khalaf) in the area of Zingabad. In record time, our heroic troops managed to purge the area of enemy troops. The results of the battle were as follows:

1. The positions of two enemy companies were seized.
2. Six (?emplacements) were taken over.
3. Three radio communications sets were captured.
4. Two 60-mm mortars were seized.
5. More than 20 Kalashnikov rifles, one (STG-9) launcher, one (EKC) machine guns, and two RPG launchers along with 50 rounds were seized.
6. One DShK heavy machine gun was seized.
7. Two thousand Kalashnikov rounds were seized.

The enemy sustained numerous casualties, both killed or wounded. Four persons were captured by our valiant troops.

We will give you with more details as soon as we receive them.

Capture of 53 'Enemy' Troops Reported

NC0803164595 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1534 GMT 8 Mar 95

[Unscheduled announcement]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] We have just received the following from the al-Quwayr axis:

Following the attack launched by the dictatorial regime's troops at midnight on the night of 6 and 7 March against the defensive positions of Kurdistan's peshmerga in the al-Quwayr area of the Irbil Governorate and the utter defeats they sustained at the hands of Kurdistan's valiant peshmerga, our troops managed to bring the situation under control and seize eight large-caliber guns, eight vehicles, six (Dimitrov) and DShK machine guns, more than 100 Kalashnikov rifles, and 200 [words indistinct] RPG launchers. Following that, Kurdistan's heroic peshmerga from the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] and the Kurdistan's Socialist Democratic Party, the Kurdistan Toilers' Party, the Iraqi Communist Party, and the Labor Party [hizb al-'amal] on the night of 7 and 8 March exploited the previous victories. The joint troops of the Kurdistan peshmerga waged an overall attack against the positions and headquarters of three enemy regiments, including the headquarters of companies, fire support battery, and dozens of posts affiliated with the 847th Brigade of the 38th Division of the VI Corps.

The peshmerga troops managed to bring all these positions under their full control and to seize the following booty:

1. Three 82-mm mortars
2. Five large-caliber 14.5-mm DShK machine guns
3. Four large-caliber 12.5-mm DShK machine guns

4. Two SPG-9 launchers
5. Ten (RBK) machine guns
6. Fourteen RPG launchers
7. One hundred and fifty Kalashnikov rifles
8. Two (Eva) vehicles
9. Two command jeeps
10. Two military Lada vehicles
11. Two hundred and eighty mortar shells, ready for launch, as well as 10 boxes of 82-mm shells
12. One hundred and fifty five boxes of 14.5-mm DShK ammunition
13. Ten boxes of 12.5-mm DShK ammunition
14. Twenty five SPG-9 rounds

It has been learned that six enemy personnel, including Regiment Commander Staff Lieutenant Colonel Majid 'Abd-al-Zahrah, were killed. In addition, 53 enemy troops were taken prisoner. [passage omitted]

'Wide-Scale' Peshmerga Attack Reported

NC0803175295 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1705 GMT 8 Mar 95

[Unscheduled announcement]

[FBIS Translated Text] We have just received the following report from the Qush Tepa-Altun Kupri axis:

In continuation of the military operations carried out by Kurdistan's peshmerga troops in response to the artillery bombardment and attacks by the enemy troops against the liberated areas and cities of Kurdistan, preliminary reports received from the Qush Tepa-Altun Kupri axis of the Irbil Governorate indicate that at 0100 this morning the peshmerga troops launched a wide-scale attack against all enemy positions along the Qush Tepa-Altun Kupri road. Our valiant troops' attacks have resulted in the following:

1. Twenty enemy [word indistinct] were seized.
2. The headquarters of two enemy companies were captured.
3. One hundred weapons, including light weapons and machine guns, were seized.
4. Two 14.5-mm DShK machine guns were seized.
5. One SPG-9 launcher was seized.
6. A number of (BKC) machine guns were seized.
7. A number of enemy soldiers were captured.

As for our losses, two of our heroic peshmerga troops were martyred. Glory and immortality for them and for all the martyrs of our people and revolution.

PUK Claims Iraqi Helicopters Attack

NC0803223395 Paris AFP in English 2202 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nicosia, March 8 (AFP)—Kurdish fighters battled with Iraqi government troops on the edge of Kurdish-controlled territory in northern Iraq Wednesday [8 March], the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) said.

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Forces of the PUK—one of the main Kurdish factions—and those of the opposition coalition Iraqi National Congress (INC) clashed with Iraqi troops in the Jabarah region near Kifri, southwest of al-Sulaymaniyah, said the PUK statement received in Cyprus.

A dozen Iraqi helicopters attacked Kurdish positions near Chamchamal, east of al-Sulaymaniyah, killing two Kurdish fighters.

Earlier Wednesday Iraqi heavy artillery pounded the towns of Qush Tepa, Kifri and Chamchamal, "causing civilian casualties," the PUK said.

The PUK retaliated, "taking control of the 53rd artillery regiment and its headquarters located between Qarah Hinjirah and Chamchamal," the statement said.

The PUK fighters seized 16 artillery pieces, two anti-aircraft batteries and took several prisoners, it added.

At least 10 Kurdish fighters were killed and 30 other people injured in clashes between the opposition and the army of President Saddam Husayn, the PUK said earlier Wednesday.

The 30 injured in fighting since Saturday included civilians, said Faraydun 'Abd-al-Qader of the PUK.

He said 40 Iraqi troops were captured and would be handed over to the INC.

Iraq confirmed fighting with the PUK on Sunday night. It said its army drove back a PUK attack, causing several casualties among the Kurds.

But Baghdad denies reports that it has been massing troops on the edge of the safe haven and shelling Kurdish towns.

The PUK and rival Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) have together controlled a large swathe of northern Iraq in defiance of Baghdad and with allied protection since an uprising after the 1991 Gulf War.

But since May the two factions have been locked in a conflict over power-sharing and tax revenue that has resulted in 2,000 deaths.

Peshmerga Counterattacks Detailed

NC0903065595 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 0401 GMT 9 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In response to the Iraqi regime's massing of troops on the borders of the liberated areas of Kurdistan and its continuous attacks against Kurdish cities and villages, the heroes of the Kurdistan peshmerga troops yesterday mounted counterattacks along several axes against the troops of the dictatorial regime. The outcome of yesterday's battles along the various resistance fronts was as follows:

1. The axis of [name indistinct]: The valiant peshmerga forces mounted a counterattack along the axis of [name indistinct] against the assembly points of the aggressive

enemy troops 15 km east of Karkuk. Our heroic troops seized the headquarters of the Medium-Range Infantry Battalion No. 53 and the headquarters of the First Commando Brigade and annihilated all the troops stationed at both positions.

2. The axis of [name indistinct]: After monitoring enemy gathering points in the region, our peshmerga mounted a surprise attack against the military units stationed in [name indistinct], 40 km northwest of Karkuk. The valiant sons of Kurdistan destroyed all the enemy targets and seized 20 military ramparts [Rabaya] and two company headquarters.

3. The axis of [name indistinct]: The heroes of the peshmerga troops mounted a lightning attack against enemy assembly points along the road of [name indistinct], approximately 50 km southeast of the Governorate of Mosul. Our forces achieved unprecedented success in record time, annihilating the enemy forces stationed there and seizing the headquarters of three regiments, along with other company headquarters, support batteries, and [words indistinct].

4. The axis of Kifri-Zanjabad: The valiant forces of the Kurdistan peshmerga surprised the enemy's massed troops in the area of Zanjabad, 10 km south of the city of Kifri. Early in the fighting our forces seized the main headquarters of the Popular Army's Challenge Forces Sector [Qati' Quwa al-Tahhadi Lil Jaysh al-Sha'bi], two company headquarters, and six enemy ramparts.

During the fighting on the various axes, our forces seized a large quantity of weapons and equipment. The list is as follows:

1. Over 486 pieces of small-caliber weapons;
2. Sixteen 150-mm guns;
3. One 23-mm gun;
4. Three [words indistinct] mortars along with 280 shells ready for launch;
5. Three 80-mm mortars with 10 cases of mortar shells;
6. One 57-mm anti-aircraft gun;
7. Five 12.5-mm machine guns;
8. Seven 14.5-mm machine guns and 2,000 rounds;
9. Thirteen [word indistinct] machine guns;
10. Twelve RPG's with 50 rounds; and
11. Three SPG-9 launchers.

During yesterday's battles, the enemy sustained heavy human and material losses. Many people, including dozens of high-ranking officers, were killed. Some 60 soldiers surrendered to the Kurdish peshmerga. They were taken to the rear lines as guests.

During the attacks four enemy tanks were damaged.

PUK Says 100 Iraqi Soldiers Killed

LD0903092495 Tehran IRNA in English 0811 GMT 9 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nowsud, Kordestan Prov., March 9, IRNA—Some 100 Iraqi forces were killed or

wounded as they clashed with the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), announced the Iraqi Kurdistan television Wednesday [8 March]. The clash occurred on Wednesday following an attack by Iraqi forces on Jalal Talabani's positions in Chamchamal and Kafra regions.

The television further announced that the Ba'athist forces after leaving behind 50 prisoners of war and a large amount of light and heavy weapons, were forced to retreat. However, the television did not comment on possible casualties by Talabani's forces.

KDP Refutes PUK Claims on Attack To Liberate Karkuk

JN0803192295 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1715 GMT 8 Mar 95

["Text" of a "press statement" issued by the Political Bureau of the Kurdistan Democratic Party; date not given—read by announcer]

[FBIS Translated Text] Since early March, the leaders of the Union [Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, PUK] have been claiming they are intending to liberate Karkuk in an operation to change the Iraqi regime. They missed no opportunity to tarnish the stands of our Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP], leveling all sorts of accusations such as cowardliness and failure to participate in this great national action. They went so far as to accuse us of conniving with the dictatorial regime. Before taking any practical step in this regard, the PUK has even claimed for itself—to the exclusion of all other Kurdish groups—the glory of liberating Karkuk and changing the regime, thinking that this would be a way out of their despicable military coup in Kurdistan and a cover for their successive military defeats in battles with our KDP forces.

To shed light on the facts, we say that certain parties and figures have recently proposed the idea of changing the dictatorial regime. As an idea and policy, this proposal was approved by the Unified Iraqi National Congress [INC], with which our party is affiliated and in whose activities it is contributing firmly and effectively. Our party has foiled many plots aimed at harming the INC, including plots by the PUK leadership.

While it is true that the INC was established for to start the process of change and establish a democratic, parliamentary, multiparty, and federal system in Iraq, what has happened is that certain parties and figures hinted that a long list of Iraqi organizations and high-ranking military figures would participate in the process of change. We have endeavored to ascertain the facts about these matters which seemed hazy and mysterious and which the PUK leadership tried to blow all out of proportion. However, we never found a satisfactory answer. Yet, we adopted practical measure to prepare our forces to participate when the serious effort begins. At the same time, we were careful not to expose our people to destruction without justification, leaving the

pompous statements and the fabrication of lies to the PUK leaders who were not satisfied with lies and exploited them to harm our party's stand and status.

Until 3 March, the information about this operation remained mysterious. However, on 4 March, the information became very clear to all parties directly concerned. We are unaware whether or not Talabani informed his staff about this information because they have continued their obsession and chose to forget that the liberation of Karkuk and the change of the regime cannot be effected by hollow statements or fabulous exaggerations, and cannot be accomplished by attacking an isolated post here or an isolated post there.

KDP Ministers' Statement on Situation in Kurdistan

JN0803215795 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1715 GMT 8 Mar 95

[Statement by the unified Kurdistan Democratic Party's ministerial bloc; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Iraqi Kurdistan Cabinet emanates from the elected parliament on a fifty-fifty basis. Therefore, whenever the parliament authorizes the formation of a government, it usually authorizes two specific individuals to form the government; one from the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP] and another from the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK]. This was the case in the formation of the first and second cabinets which have resigned, and in the formation of the third designated government which has not yet been officially announced.

Therefore, the legitimacy of the government, its work, and powers emanate from the collective action and the common desire of the KDP and the PUK blocs. This means that any decision must be approved by the prime minister, Kostar Rasul, and his deputy, Roz Nuri Shawiz, and, consequently, the two ministerial blocs. The second cabinet has resigned and its powers are limited by law to running the day to day business until the formation of the third cabinet.

Following the recent bloody coup by the PUK leadership, the Cabinet failed to hold any sessions. The last session was held on 16 December 1994, in which the ministers bade farewell. The PUK's putschist actions had paralyzed the government. The PUK also plundered the houses and property of the ministers and the under secretaries affiliated with our party's bloc. These officials were also pursued by the PUK forces under the direct command of the prime minister, who was supposed to protect the citizens and his colleagues in the Cabinet and the property and government institutions instead of directly supervising and ordering his personal body guards to plunder the homes of his colleague ministers, expropriate their homes, and give the homes and shops to other people.

Now, the government is paralyzed in administrative terms, and is suspended by law and in practice. Only one party is controlling what remained of the government institutions in the capital Irbil and is directing its work by force in an illegal and illegitimate way. This act constitutes, from a legal viewpoint, a usurpation of the legitimate power.

Therefore, the prime minister and his colleague from the PUK bloc in the region's government have no right to make any decision or take any measure in the name of the Cabinet. Nor do they have the right to exercise the powers of the Cabinet or its leadership—consisting of the prime minister and his deputy. They also have no right to abuse power in any way. It must be noted that Kosrat and his colleagues are in the minority in the current Cabinet.

Therefore, we announce to the parliament, our Kurdish people, and their friends that all the measures and decisions by Kosrat and his colleagues in the name of the government are invalid as of 16 December 1994 until the day in which things are made clear and legitimacy is restored to the region's institutions.

For further clarification, we consider such decisions null and void, particularly the ministerial orders, transfers, amending the titles of jobs, dismissing or punishing employees, the appointment of new employees, releasing the convicted prisoners, granting government ranks and privileges, granting housing plots, distributing agricultural lands, striking contracts in the name of government institutions, the sale of government property or their transfer to places other than their original places, and other actions taken in the name of the region's government.

[Signed] Dr. Roz Nuri Shawiz, deputy prime minister; Yunus Rujbani, minister of interior; Muhamamd Malla Qadir, minister of awqaf; Amin Mawlud, minister of industry; Dr. Idris Hadi, minister of transport and communications; Mamon Brifkani, minister of construction; Qadir Jabari, minister of justice; Dr. Nasih Ghafur, minister of education

Talabani Congratulates Peshmerga, Cites 'All-Out Uprising'

NC0803164195 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother Jalal Talabani, secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] has sent a cable to brother Kusrat Rasul, PUK Political Bureau member, on the occasion of the remarkable victories scored by the heroic peshmerga fighters against the remnants of the fascist regime in Baghdad.

The cable reads: Greetings to you and to all the brave peshmerga fighters and their field commanders in Kurdistan: I congratulate you and I glory in these tremendous victories. You are repeating the glories and feats of your region. You are leading the peshmerga hero fighters

toward the imminent victory under the lofty banner of the Unified Iraqi National Congress.

The painful blows that you dealt to the enemy forces are aimed at liberating cherished Iraq and establishing a democratic federal Iraq. The regional capital Irbil is responding to the appeal of Baghdad and is extending help to the sons of Baghdad for the sake of an all-out uprising to rid of the dictatorial regime.

PUK Radio Says Regime's Days 'Numbered,' Urges Revolt

NC0803181595 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1638 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] With the advent of the month of March and on the anniversary of the glorious 1991 uprising, the signs of a new uprising against the ruling regime are looming in the horizons of northern and southern Iraq.

Reports arriving from various parts of the country affirm that the earth is shaking under the feet of the dictatorship. The rebelling masses are escalating their collective and individual revolutionary effort and are striking panic and fear in the hearts of the regime's cronies.

Reports from al-Basrah, al-'Amarah, and al-Kut indicate that there are resistance operations, violent battles, acts of mutiny, and mass desertion from the Army. Reports from Baghdad indicate that since the day before yesterday the Iraqi capital has been in a state of tension and guarded calm amid stringent security measures taken by the ruling regime. Our correspondent in Baghdad reports that the Baghdad rulers, afraid of the people's coming wrath, have set up sentry points and adopted security measures throughout the capital. Armored units of the Republican Guard and the internal security forces have deployed around the regime's vital installations, such as the radio and television building, the Defense and Interior ministries, banks, and other places. Our correspondent has reported that the regime has divided the capital into eight sectors to control the deteriorating security situation.

On the war fronts in Kurdistan, the dictatorial regime's forces have suffered utter defeats in the past two days all along the contact lines. The Iraqi opposition forces and the brave Kurdish peshmerga forces have inflicted major defeats on the remnants of the Army of the dictatorial, defeated, and collapsing regime.

As we affirmed in our previous statements today and yesterday, the resolve of the retreating remnants of the regime's forces is weakening under the blows of the brave Kurdish peshmerga forces and the allied Iraqi and Kurdistan forces. They are retreating on all fronts, leaving behind their headquarters, positions, and heavy weapons. Whole units have surrendered to the peshmerga and joined the people's ranks to fight against the dictatorship.

They are, therefore, the tidings of an uprising and an all-out revolution. O sons of the Iraqi people in central and southern Iraq and on every inch of Iraqi land: Support your brothers in Kurdistan and join the Iraqi national forces allied in the Unified Iraqi National Congress and other opposition forces that are standing up against dictatorship and are shelling with volleys of a sacred people's hatred. O our kinsfolk in central and southern Iraq and elsewhere. This is your date with destiny. Form your secret and revolutionary cells and open the fire of your sacred hatred against the wicked dictatorial regime. Prepare for the coming round of the big confrontation. The days of the evil rulers in Baghdad are numbered. Our date with freedom and democracy is imminent. O brave sons of Baghdad. O youths of al-Kazimiyah, al-Shu'lah, and al-Saydiyah. O masses of Madinat al-Thawrah and Madinat al-Hurriyah. O toilers of Baghdad stricken by wars, famine, and wicked dictatorial sins. O sons of al-Karkh and al-Rasafah, who have drunk from the good waters of the Tigris and grown on its banks. This is the call of right from Kurdistan. It is urging you to struggle and revolt.

PUK Political Bureau on Situation, Major Developments

NC0903074295 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 0424 GMT 9 Mar 95

[Report on a statement by Kuthrat Rasul 'Ali, member of the political bureau of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, to "today's edition" of KURDISTAN NWAY—read by announcer]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Iraqi regime seeks to utilize the tense situation in the Kurdistan region, which is the result of infighting. It is trying to push its [word indistinct] troops to the areas under its control in order to reinforce their positions on the contact lines with the Kurdistan peshmerga. The regime recently massed large military concentrations near the areas of Kifri, Chamchamal, and Irbil and bombarded Qada' Chamchamal with heavy artillery.

The valiant peshmerga confronted the enemy forces and achieved brilliant victories against the fleeing Iraqi regime forces.

[Words indistinct] all Kurdish parties to defend Kurdistan and appealed to the friends of the Kurdish people to provide assistance to and support for the Kurdish people to end the deteriorating economic and social conditions.

Commenting on the role of the Unified Iraqi National Congress [UINC] in checking any attack against the Kurdistan region, brother Kuthrat Rasul said: We believe that we are capable of undertaking many national tasks and missions under the UINC banner, particularly at this stage when the villages under the yoke of the dictatorship, like Baghdad and Karkuk, are suffering from appalling living conditions. The sons of the Iraqi people are currently awaiting many changes. We hope

the sons of the Kurdish people and the masses in Kurdistan will seize this favorable opportunity to attain final salvation. This stage marks the anniversary of the March uprising of 1991, in which the dictatorial regime's institutions were expelled from the land of Kurdistan.

In conclusion, Brother Kuthrat reiterated the need for cooperation and coordination among Kurdistan peshmerga and the Iraqi opposition forces. He said: I believe that if all the powers of the Iraqi opposition stood in one rank with the masses of Kurdistan and moved together toward the desired goal, major developments would occur. We should not miss this historic opportunity, he stressed.

Barzani, Talabani at 'Loggerheads' Over Trade Revenue

NC0803140895 Paris AFP in English 1338 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ankara, March 8 (AFP)—Feuding Iraqi Kurdish leaders Mas'ud Barzani and Jalal Talabani are still at loggerheads over customs revenues from trade on the border with Turkey, the TURKISH DAILY NEWS reported Wednesday [8 March].

"It is a violation of the international sanctions," charged Talabani, referring to the UN sanctions in force since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

Talabani, whose Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) has fought Barzani's Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) since May at the cost of around 2,000 lives, accused the KDP of trying to monopolize Kurdish-held northern Iraq.

"They are preventing the government from working," he told the English-language newspaper, referring to a Kurdish administration set up after elections in May 1992.

Barzani said in a separate interview that the PUK triggered the bloodshed in northern Iraq to block fresh elections. "It's a war of democracy against dictatorship," he said.

The PUK had "stolen" millions of dollars in areas under its control, the KDP chief charged.

"They have to get out of Irbil unconditionally," he said, referring to the city where a Kurdish parliament sits and which fell to the PUK in December. "After that, it might be possible to conduct some talks."

Talabani, meanwhile, proposed the disarming of all towns including Zakho, where the KDP controls border trade with Turkey and where a car-bomb attack killed 78 people on February 27.

He also called for mediation from Turkey, which has denied busting UN sanctions and said its lorry drivers take exempted goods such as food to northern Iraq and return with only small quantities of oil.

"They can do a lot. For example, they can invite both Mr. Barzani and Talabani to Ankara, they can mediate,"

said Talabani, who is suspected in Ankara of helping Turkish Kurdish separatist rebels.

Turkish officials said the army commander for the southeast region, General Hasan Kundakci, met last Saturday with Barzani to discuss the situation in northern Iraq.

The meeting took place in Silopi, a town just 10 kilometres (six miles) from the border with Iraq, a foreign ministry spokesman said without giving details of their talks.

A Kurdish source said the general called for an immediate halt to the KDP-PUK clashes.

Islamic Party Denies Role in Reported Anti-Regime Attack

JN0803202595 (*Clandestine*) *Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic* 1715 GMT 8 Mar 95

["Text" of a statement issued by the Islamic Movement in Kurdistan; date not given—read by announcer]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. God said: This is a plane statement to men.

Questions have been rife on the possibility that the Iraqi forces might attack Kurdistan or that an attack will be mounted by the Kurdish forces, parties, and movements against positions and cities that are under the Iraqi government control.

Having carried out investigations from various areas immediately opposite the Iraqi forces, we have not been able to ascertain any new movements by the Iraqi forces.

We in the Islamic Movement in Iraqi Kurdistan have not issued any decision on this issue. So far, our forces have not moved toward the Iraqi forces and positions in view

of the current circumstances in Kurdistan in particular and in Iraq in general—circumstances requiring calm, firmness, and ascertaining facts. If necessary, our forces are on a state of alert and fully prepared to carry out their Islamic and national duties, taking the interest of our Muslim people and the neighboring states in consideration.

May God's peace and blessings be upon you.

[Signed] The Political Bureau of the Islamic Movement in Iraqi Kurdistan. Dated 5 Shawwal, 1415 of the hegira; corresponding to 6 March 1995

'Aziz Confers With Security Council Delegates

JN0903105295 *Baghdad INA in English* 0905 GMT 9 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New York, Mar 9, INA—Iraq's Deputy Premier Tariq 'Aziz held on Wednesday [8 March] a series of meetings with a number of ambassadors of the Security Council member states.

Mr. 'Aziz conferred with the Omani, Indonesian and Nigerian permanent ambassadors to the U.N. respectively. Mr. 'Aziz met later on Wednesday the Argentinian permanent ambassador to the United Nations.

Oman, Nigeria, Indonesia and Argentina are the Security Council non-permanent members.

Correction to 'Free Officers' Urge Opposition

WA0903144495

This correction pertains to the item headlined 'Free Officers' Urge Opposition to 'Saddam's Aggression,' published in the the 6 March Near East & South Asia DAILY REPORT, page 16:

Column two, make sourceline read: LD0303205095 London Iraqi Broadcasting Corporation Press Release... (correcting location of source)

Shahal Says Charges To Be Filed in Histadrut Case

TA0703194095 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 7 Mar 95 p 1, 2

[Report by Bill Hutman]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Charges will be filed soon against some of the suspects in the Histadrut fraud case, Police Minister Moshe Shahal said last night.

Shahal also revealed that a police probe of the Histadrut has been under way since September 1993. Until now, police have said the investigation was opened only several months ago.

The investigation was carried out in secret until recently, Shahal told the Mabat news show.

Senior police sources earlier in the day contradicted Shahal's statements. They told THE JERUSALEM POST it would be some time before charges were brought against any of the suspects.

The sources confirmed that "intelligence work" on the Histadrut had been going on for more than a year. But, they said, there was no formal investigation until recently.

Shahal, meanwhile, vowed not to intervene in the investigation, which mostly involves suspects in his own Labor Party. "I have always maintained a policy that investigations must be color-blind to political parties," Shahal said. "The prime minister has never intervened in any way in an investigation. For reasons of courtesy, I have updated him" about investigations, but only about proceedings that have already been completed.

The National Fraud Squad again interrogated 'Uzi Fassa, activities department coordinator with the Histadrut-owned Mifaley Tarbut Vehinukh [Culture and Education] company.

Fassa has already given police tapes he made of conversations with senior Labor Party officials in which they discuss ways to transfer Histadrut funds to their personal coffers.

He has also turned over documents detailing the wrongdoings of Labor officials, according to police sources. The material is presently being reviewed by interrogators.

MK [Knesset member] Shmuel Avital will present more material that incriminates Labor members to police today, TV Channel One reported.

Police sources said investigators are concentrating on uncovering material showing that Labor officials used Histadrut money to fund their 1992 Knesset primary campaigns and last year's Histadrut election.

Evidence showing wrongdoing before 1992 has also been uncovered, but it is being set aside, for the meantime, to concentrate on the more recent period, the sources said.

Several Labor officials in the Histadrut apparently used funds earmarked for their offices in the organization to help run their primary campaigns, according to the police.

Histadrut sources said Labor illegally obtained some NIS [new Israeli shekels] 30 million in Histadrut funds for last year's labor federation election.

Deputy Minister Masha Lubelsky, former Na'amat [women's organization] chairwoman, and former Histadrut secretary-general Hayim Haberfeld have already been interrogated by police.

Police sources refused to say whether Transport Minister Yisrael Qeysar, also a former Histadrut secretary-general, would be interrogated. Qeysar is accused of diverting Histadrut funds to his campaign for the Labor nomination for the premiership in 1992. He has denied any wrongdoing.

Qeysar's spokesman said that, despite reports to the contrary, Qeysar has not been questioned by the police.

Histadrut sources, meanwhile, said that the lack of early leaks of the investigation to the media reflects the "I watch your back, you watch my back" attitude within the organization.

"I was not just by chance, that the police came to the Treasury offices and took documents (last month), but only a week later did the story reach the media," said one source. "In most normal organizations such an event would have been known to the public within minutes."

Harish: Histadrut Probe 'Could' Deal Labor 'Grave Blow'

TA0703195195 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 7 Mar 95 pp 1, 2

[Report by Sarah Honig]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Labor could be dealt a grave blow "should the police probe into Histadrut finances be prolonged and involve an increasing number of Labor politicians," Trade and Industry Minister Mikha Harish warned yesterday.

"The longer the police examine Labor's affairs, the greater the danger for the party," the former Labor secretary-general said. "The investigation could be very prolonged and people's nervous systems could be placed under severe strain for months. There is no telling where that could lead. Our fervent hope is that the police will conclude their business as speedily as possible."

Labor is described as panicky about a possible chain reaction of recriminations, some of which is already apparent. The party, it was widely suggested, must now take damage control measures and seek to keep the police investigation as short as possible.

Lengthy investigations and numerous revelations of wrongdoing could hurt Labor so much that its electoral

prospects would be further eroded, and it could become unattractive enough for new recruits—like former chief of staff Ehud Barak—to eventually shun it.

In addition, Histadrut Chairman Haym Ramon's return to Labor might be jeopardized, because he and the previous Histadrut administration would again be at war with each other.

Some in Labor fear the party might be unable to proceed with the next primaries or even the membership drive that must precede them. The most worrisome prediction, however, is that unprecedented infighting would be sparked.

A possible foretaste was offered when MK [Knesset member] Yoram Lass accused Ramon and his associate Amir Peretz of being as guilty of exploiting Histadrut facilities for electioneering as they accuse Laborites of doing.

"It galls me that the present heads of the Histadrut, who selfrighteously assume the pose of the accusers and wash their own hands of blame, enjoyed the same Histadrut facilities as others in Labor," Lass said.

"Let Lass go to the police," Peretz replied. "No one can challenge my record. My insurance policy is my overdraft at the bank."

A similar line was adopted by other involved in the recriminations.

Deputy Trade and Industry Minister Masha Lubelsky, who headed last year's Labor Histadrut campaign and was questioned by police, denied taking part in any pre-election meeting in which "the party heads supposedly plotted to finance the campaign with Histadrut funds. [no close quotes as published]

"I was responsible for campaign expenditures from the Labor Party side and was not involved in internal Histadrut goings on" Lubelsky said. "I never heard of any such meeting."

In addition, she denied knowing about a NIS [new Israeli shekels] 600,000 payment, also from Histadrut coffers, to finance spying on Ramon in the hope of finding dirt on him.

Me'ir Gat, now head of the Histadrut administrative wing and then chairman of the information drive of the Labor campaign, likewise denied knowing about any meeting to cover up Histadrut financing for Labor. "I never took part in any such schemes, had no financial dealings and didn't write out any fictional invoices or receipts."

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who on Sunday was confident that "the possible misdeeds of individuals would not rub off on Labor," vowed yesterday to "stop commenting on the issue until the police finish their job. I can't judge, and the innocent should be presumed innocent."

Knesset Endorses Histadrut-Related Bill

TA0703193895 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1600 GMT 7 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Knesset has endorsed in its final reading the bill by a Likud Knesset Member [MK], Limor Livnat, requiring the state comptroller to examine the financial affairs of the Histadrut.

Forty eight MK's from all factions supported the bill, making it a law. Only two MK's, from HADASH [Democratic Front for Peace and Equality], opposed the legislation. Histadrut Chairman and MK Hayim Ramon promised the state comptroller she would receive all the help she wants and that nothing would be covered up.

The office of Transportation Minister Yisra'el Qeysar is accusing the police of character assassination by a leaking to the media of what Qeysar's office says is baseless information concerning charges against the minister in the Histadrut scandal. The response from Minister Qeysar's office came after police sources said there would be no choice but to summon him for questioning on suspicion that he was involved in the illegal spending of Histadrut money.

Zvili: Labor Members' Misdeeds Have 'No Bearing' on Party

TA0803101495 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 8 Mar 95 p 12

[Report by Sarah Honig]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Labor Party intends to set up a special team to assess the damage which the revelations of corruption in the Histadrut are causing the party. The fear in the Labor leadership is that the damage is already considerable and will only increase, despite the party's attempts to draw a distinction between itself and its representatives in the Histadrut.

The mounting fears in Labor are giving new impetus to demands that the party rethink the primaries system, which many, according to Secretary-General Nisim Zvili, see as responsible for much of the wrong-doing in the Histadrut.

Many of the episodes disclosed thus far deal with attempts to gain advantage via use of Histadrut funds in the party primaries. "Many people are coming to me now and saying that if the primaries can do all this, in their very first round in the party, what can we expect later on?" Zvili said. "Perhaps the detriments of this system far outweigh its merits? This is what I am being asked and I agree that the questions need to be considered very carefully."

The state of the party following the furor in the Histadrut will be deliberated tomorrow at the party political bureau's weekly meeting, in what is expected to be a very heated session. Already on the agenda is the proposal to readmit Histadrut Chairman Hayim Ramon and MKs

[Knesset Members] 'Amir Peretz and Shmu'el Avital to Labor. This, too, has become a far more emotive issue than it was a few days ago, as many in the party now blame Ramon and his supporters for informing on their Labor predecessors in the Histadrut and for supplying the police with material against Labor higher-ups.

Zvili, however, came to Ramon's defense yesterday, saying that "It is clear to us that Ramon did not instigate any of this. The police involvement in the Histadrut case was the outcome of a wholly unconnected police investigation." In fact, it is widely agreed now that the police stumbled on the Histadrut corruption case when it investigated the wire-tapping in the tabloids and came across the private investigators hired to spy after Ramon in the 1994 Histadrut campaign.

No operative decisions are expected regarding the Histadrut affair, but Zvili promised yesterday the bureau members would be let in on all that is already known.

He stressed the Labor line again: "The party is not connected to any of the goings-on in the Histadrut. Our funds are one thing and theirs are another and the two sets of book-keeping—the Histadrut's and the party's—are separate. If some members of Labor have done wrong, this has no bearing upon the party."

Zvili is slated to deliver a detailed version of just how Labor is connected with the Histadrut's Mif'aley Hinukh Vetarbut Company, through whose services, it is alleged, Labor sought to finance its Histadrut campaign last year. Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin is also due to address the members on the subject.

Labor Leaders Meet, Discuss 'Saving' Party

TA0803061495 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin plans today to convene a meeting of Labor ministers to discuss revelations of financial improprieties in the Histadrut labor federation. Tomorrow the issue will be discussed at the party bureau.

Last night, eight Labor party members, the so-called octet, met at Jewish Agency Chairman Avraham Burg's office to discuss the situation in the party. After the meeting Burg said the eight see themselves as a central force responsible for saving the party.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English at 0500 GMT on 8 March adds that, speaking after the octet's meeting, "Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin said that there will be no cover-ups in the investigation of the financial irregularities in the Histadrut and that those responsible will pay for their actions."]

Labor Secretary General Zvili reacted to the octet's meeting by saying that Avraham Burg, who had just been appointed as Jewish Agency chairman on the Labor ticket, was acting irresponsibly when he spoke of a change of guard. Minister Shetrit said the octet's remarks

on the need for a generation change reveal disloyalty to the party and its leader. They made these remarks in a conversation with our correspondent Shmu'el Tal.

Call To Replace Party Leadership Voiced

TA0803114295 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 8 Mar 95 p 6

[Report by Nehama Dowek]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] "A team that will lead the party to victory should be established now. There is a group that ought to take the lead and pull the cart out of the mud in which it has sunk," Knesset Member [MK] Hagay Marom, a member of the Ramon octet, announced yesterday.

Another octet member, Avraham Burg, called for replacing "all the officials who were involved in the Histadrut affair." His confidants said that his statement was not referring only to Yisra'el Qeysar and the MK's who started their careers in the Histadrut, but that he was calling for the replacement of the entire party leadership—including Rabin—and for placing the Ramon group at the head of the party prior to the 1996 elections.

Yesterday the octet held a special meeting at which it was explicitly stated that the party leadership must be replaced. This was the first time the group, which normally meets in Ramon's office, convened at the office of MK Burg, the Jewish Agency chairman. The group includes Hayim Ramon, Hagay Merom, Avraham Burg, Nawaf Musaliha, Ya'el Dayan, 'Amir Peretz, Shmu'el Avital, and Yosi Beilin.

Ramon briefed his associates in detail on the Histadrut investigations and their possible outcome. The group is preparing to bring Ramon back to the party "because he embodies the hope that, having finished cleaning out the Histadrut stables, he will bring the party a victory over the Likud." [passage omitted]

MK Burg said at the meeting: "This is a serious storm, and since it broke out during the election year, it is liable to wreak havoc. We must cleanse the party quickly, because unless we do, the disease will spread. We must repair and cleanse, and nothing cleanses better than the public sunlight. Our group has continuously cautioned about what was going on in the Histadrut, and the result is that Ramon and his colleagues are where they are." [passage omitted]

Ramon Denies Planning To Replace Labor Leadership

TA0803114495 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Histadrut Chairman Ramon denies that he and his octet colleagues intend to take steps that will result in the replacement of the prime minister and the Labor leadership. Ramon told out

correspondent Esti Perez that his stand is unequivocal. He will do his best to help Yitzhaq Rabin lead the party and be its candidate for premiership in the next elections—regardless of where I am myself, Ramon said.

Histadrut Affair Said Opportunity for Labor Change of Guard

TA0803171095 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 8 Mar 95
p B1

[Commentary by Gid'on Samet: "Not Necessarily Spelling the End"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It was bound to happen. The only question was when will the old whales who beached themselves dry out. And yet, it will be the small fries who will spend hours in police interrogation rooms—not because they have sinned, but because the collapse of the Histadrut leadership is but a small sample of the crumbling ruling party. Corruption and affairs of all kinds have always spelled the end for every Labor Movement prime minister—including Rabin and his first government—with the exception of Levi Eshkol, who died while prime minister.

It is not really clear which comes first in the ecology of power: Do scandals and corruption surface when it is feeble, or are they the causes of destruction? The current shock bolsters the first possibility in the history of Labor falls. An acquired immune deficiency exposes all that has not been revealed while the weakening political body was still able to defend itself. In that sense, the spring of 1995 may go down in history as the beginning of the end of Labor's rule.

The Histadrut affair, however, is something else too: It is a clear sign that the time has come for the long awaited change of the Labor top line. Labor will not become extinct over several cooked books; parties have recuperated from worse crises. This affair, however, is a sign of something deeper and more crucial.

The amount of dirt dug up is not the main problem for Labor. It is not a corrupt party. It will have to endure several months of public hell because it failed to realize on time that it must hand the giant power center of the Histadrut over to new forces.

Favoritism, the method of extending favors, died long before the police had to summon the Qeysar-Haberfeld gang for questioning. The rights and wrongs of our political system changed years ago. Tough apparatuses for inspection and prosecution put plenty of serial criminals who followed an outdated and corrupt code of ethics behind bars.

The Histadrut Executive Committee was perhaps the last relic. The political corruption found there indicates how shortsighted Rabin was in his awkward attempt to prevent the Histadrut upheaval, which started when whale-riding Hayim Ramon was, so it seemed, defeated in the Labor conference in January 1994.

The essential lesson of the Histadrut affair is indeed this link between the corruption story and the need, so far held up, to change the guard in the party. We are witnessing the death throes of the old system. The Likud, which itself cooked a few books during election campaigns, will not necessarily benefit from the humiliation of its adversary. The nightmare does destabilize Labor, but it potentially can strengthen new forces who are just waiting in the wings, and put them on top.

Rabin, the commentator, seemed agitated in front of the TV cameras over recent evenings. He apparently realizes that the end of this story is not yet known, nor has he run out of ammunition. There are still things for him to do. If he learned the lesson of the Labor conference in which Ramon warned about the beached whales, the right thing for the prime minister to do would be to speed up as much as he can the rejuvenation of the top. He has grown too accustomed to running the government singlehandedly. Just like with the Oslo agreement, he has been dragging his feet over the reshuffle for much too long.

Ramon's Histadrut victory and subsequent expulsion from Labor, along with his associates, was the result of Rabin's misjudgment. Today, it seems ridiculous to consider another hopeless campaign of entrenchment like the one he conducted 14 months ago to promote a secretary general who then looked like a loser and will now spend much of his time in the company of police detectives. Today, Rabin has a chance to bolster his shaken team. Ehud Barak has mastered the quality of shaking off any failure that might occur during his term. Yosi Beilin, whom Rabin has often abused, is an excellent player. And Hayim Ramon, who quite correctly personifies the campaign of cleansing Histadrut, is a God given present to Rabin for whom the Histadrut stench has become a major political problem.

Rabin has this familiar tendency to do the right thing only after everyone is fed up, leaving his act impotent. Between the entanglement over the arrangement in the West Bank and the corruption in the Histadrut, time is running out. Rabin has only a few months to quickly move two issues forward that are closely interrelated: Speed up the interim agreement and bolster his government.

If he continues hesitating on these two issues, it is hard to see what could prevent his term from meeting its pathetic end, practically, before the end of this year.

Sheves Abandons Plan To Quit in Response to Rabin Plea

TA0803180395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1600
GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prime minister's media adviser says the director general of the Prime Minister's Office, Shim'on Sheves, informed Yitzhaq Rabin a few weeks ago that he wished to resign.

According to the statement released today, the prime minister called on Sheves to reconsider and the director general agreed to stay on. Prime Minister Rabin said today he values Sheves very much for the contribution he has made, and that the director general has his full trust and support.

Last weekend the media reported that Sheves was considering resigning due to what was viewed as his declining influence.

Rabin Not To Rule Out Running for Prime Minister

TA0903095595 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 9 Mar 95 p 2

[Report by Menahem Rahat]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin does not rule out running for prime minister in 1996, it appears from Rabin's remarks yesterday after he met with Hayim Ramon. Rabin has so far insisted on not referring in any way to the issue of competing in the next elections.

On leaving the meeting with Ramon, Rabin said: "I cannot refer to what will happen in 1996. The generations problem is a biological problem, an age problem. The option has to be businesslike."

Hayim Ramon made it clear yesterday from every forum that he supports Rabin continuing as prime minister after 1996. "I definitely support Rabin continuing in office and I believe that only he is capable of leading Labor to victory in 1996," Ramon said. "Not only will I not run against him, but I will even do my best to make sure that Rabin continues to lead Labor as its candidate for prime minister, unconnected to my position. Whoever weakens Rabin, weakens the entire Labor movement. Those who promise change in the leadership are irresponsible people who make irresponsible statements. Rabin is our one and only candidate."

Ramon's unequivocal remarks on that subject were due to his anger over statements by his colleagues in the Group of Eight, a group of Labor Knesset members he leads. Ramon's anger surfaced following interviews two members of the group, Avraham Burg and Hagay Merom, gave during a meeting of the octet in Burg's Jewish Agency office. The members spoke about the need to change Labor's leadership.

Burg said yesterday: "Ramon is our most senior member. He has to compete for prime minister, and when he decides to do so, he will find us behind him."

Merom said: "There is no rift in the Group of Eight. There is some tension, but we will overcome it. In the meeting of the octet, we did not discuss any putsch or any attempt to take over the party. Whoever speaks about such things is expressing his own thoughts."

The Labor Bureau will today discuss the affair and the report issued by the Goldschmidt Committee on how to bring Ramon and his friends back into Labor. Rabin received the committee's recommendations yesterday.

[Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST, under a front page banner headline on 9 March saying: "Rabin: I Am Running for PM in 1996," says "Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin declared yesterday he would be a candidate for premier in 1996 and in the meantime would do all he can to rehabilitate his injured Labor party." However, the only quote the newspaper attributes to the prime minister in the article is: "The generations problem in politics is a biological one, but in each case it should be treated according to the situation at hand, and not according to automatic formulas," Rabin said after meeting with Histadrut Chairman Hayim Ramon."]

Ramon, Milo Hold 'Intensive' Contacts on New Party

TA0903111295 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 9 Mar 95 p 4

[Report by Nehama Dowek]

[FBIS Translated Text] Hayim Ramon and Tel Aviv Mayor Roni Milo have been in intensive contacts in recent months on the possibility of setting up a new party together.

Milo recently met with a businessman who promised to organize for the two a meeting with other businessmen and economists to look into the possibility of setting up such a party. It was also reported that Milo and Ramon ordered a public opinion poll, which showed that if the two head a new party they have a chance of winning more than 30 Knesset seats.

"Milo and I have good ties and we are friends," Ramon said yesterday. "The talk about this or that party is not serious." Nevertheless, he confirmed that he and Milo are meeting. "We do not at present have any political ties. He is in the Likud and I am a member of the Labor faction. Things could be different tomorrow. How can you tell? Be patient. Nobody has decided anything, and if they have, then they have not informed us."

Labor Votes for Ramon Return; Histadrut Officials on Probe

TA0903155895 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 9 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] This afternoon, a large majority of the Labor Bureau members voted for the return of Hayim Ramon and his associates to the party bosom. After the vote, the prime minister told our correspondent Shmu'el Tal that the decision allows Ramon and his associates to return to the party immediately.

Speaking before the Labor Bureau prior to the vote, Prime Minister Rabin said that the party is encountering difficulties in its struggle against the media assault

which, in part, is baseless. He stressed that comrades should not be forsaken, but that uncovered facts should not be ignored as well. The prime minister urged the party members to restrain themselves and not to lend a hand to the unbridled attack.

Labor Secretary General Nisim Zvili also called on the party members not to take part in the public lynching and avoid pushing fellow party members into acts of despair.

The heads of the Labor Histadrut faction decided today on ways to act and operate their institutions in the wake of the police probes. Faction Chairman Hayim Habelfeld told our correspondent Ya'el Ayalon that the new steps will be implemented as early as next week, after things become clearer. He stressed that he does not fear for himself and that he has not yet been summoned for another questioning by the police.

Transportation Minister Yisra'el Qeysar stated today that he will allow no one to tarnish his reputation because it is the only asset he has acquired in his 30 years of public service. Our correspondent Nati Zilberman reports that, speaking during a working tour of Migdal Ha'emeq, Qeysar said that he has emerged unscathed from every senior post he has ever held.

The transportation minister noted that a final flight agreement between Israel and Jordan will be signed within two weeks.

Rabin on Party Crisis; Peres Urges 'Daring' Step on Syria

TA0803191495 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 8 Mar 95

[Menashe Raz video report]

[FBIS Translated Text] This evening, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin received the recommendations of the Goldsmith Committee which suggests that Hayim Ramon and his associates be allowed to unconditionally return to Labor. Our correspondent Menashe Raz updates us on the Labor situation:

[Begin recording] [Raz] Mr. Rabin, do you also believe there may be a changing of the guard in the Labor leadership in 1996?

[Rabin, smiling] It is hard for me to answer this. I believe the generational issue is a biologic, and age plays a role. People will have to be elected on merit.

[Ramon] I repeat, say, and—what is more important—act to have Yitzhaq Rabin run as a candidate for Labor Party head, or in a framework he chooses—I assume it will be Labor—for the premiership. I will support him regardless of where I will be.

[Raz] This evening, Hayim Ramon met Rabin at the prime minister's bureau at the Knesset. The meeting was scheduled to deal with the pension fund issue. Yet, to the

onlooker, a Rabin-Ramon meeting brings to mind the burning issues on the agenda. It raises the question of a changing of the guard in Labor, but also the question of whether there is a point in conducting negotiations on the return of Ramon and his associates to Labor in view of the recent storm. The house on 110 Hayarqon St. [Labor headquarters] is on fire.

In principle, are you in favor of what has been coined the cleaning of stables both in the Histadrut and in the party?

[Rabin] Since I do not believe we are dealing with horses, I will not discuss stables. If improper things were done, which has to be ascertained by the authorities, they will be addressed. I do not believe that it is linked to Labor as a whole. In the worst case, it regards individuals.

[Raz] If indictments are filed against a cabinet minister or a Knesset member, do you believe they should resign?

[Rabin] There are laws in Israel and if, God forbid, what you describe does happen, each person will have to abide by the law.

[Raz] And back to the Histadrut secretary general. Does the octet of which he is a member still exist? It appears that the recent reports somewhat harmed this political entity.

[Ramon] The octet remains an octet. I only suggest that, since some of the members fail to understand that these days are sensitive, the octet relax a little. If it wants to get together these days, I will take some time. [end recording]

[In an announcer-read report, Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew at 1800 GMT on 8 March adds: "Senior Labor members recommended to Prime Minister Rabin today that he immediately initiate a daring political move that will lead to the signing of a peace accord with Syria. Our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen reports that the members, including Foreign Minister Peres, told Rabin this is the only way to salvage the government from the dire straits it is in over the Histadrut crisis."]

Peres' Bureau Denies Contacts for UN Secretary General Post

TA0803191895 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 8 Mar 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has recently spoken with French and U.S. elements regarding a possibility that he would run for the post of the UN secretary general in about a year, after Butrus Butrus-Ghali retires. This idea was raised by several U.S. Jewish leaders, including Edgar Bronfman, a friend of Peres. Our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen reports that sources in Peres' bureau deny that Peres held contacts with heads of state on this matter.

Report Warns of Reactions to Orient House Checks

TA0903073695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 9 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Our correspondent Aviv Bushinsky has obtained a copy of a classified report drafted by the adviser to the police commissioner, which says that enforcement of the law curbing Palestinian activities in Orient House might trigger severe reactions, including incitement in the mosques and acts of violence in East Jerusalem.

Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert said that the planned visit to Orient House by Douglas Hogg, the British minister of state for foreign affairs, impinges on the status of Jerusalem. Olmert asked the prime minister to prevent the visit, and even lodged a protest with the Foreign Office in London.

Bill Banning Talks on Displaced Palestinian Defeated

TA0903111995 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 9 Mar 95 p 2

[Report by Liat Collins and Jon Immanuel]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Justice Minister David Liba'i said yesterday the question of Palestinian right of return is not on the government's agenda.

Liba'i was responding to a private member's bill by 'Uzi Landau (Likud) which would have prevented the government from holding negotiations on the refugees and displaced Palestinians.

His bill was defeated 47 to 36. Later in the evening the plenum held a noisy and emotional discussion on 10 motions to the agenda on the subject.

The talk was drawn out by heckling and verbal crossfire that ping-ponged across the plenum.

Liba'i called Landau's bill "redundant" and said it was aimed "at spreading fear among the public."

He said even the Palestinians had agreed to discuss the subject only in the framework of the final talks. He noted

that the Knesset could not enact laws over the territories, which made the discussion on the right of return there superfluous.

Landau said Judea and Samaria would turn into bases of terrorism if millions return. If Palestinian terrorism is the result of poverty and economic problems, as the government claims, why would the government want to bring thousands more people into the territories which cannot afford to support them, he added.

"It's a policy of national suicide," Landau said the return of the displaced Palestinians would mark the start of a process which would allow for the return of millions from 1948 and before. He accused the government of cynically using the Camp David Accord to justify its policy.

Liba'i rejected the charge and said Oslo had copied the Camp David Accord's clause on those displaced from 1967.

Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin, who responded to the motions to the agenda, also said the discussions on the displaced were based on the clause copied from the Camp David Accord.

According to Beilin, the subject of the 1967 displaced was raised at Camp David by then prime minister Menahem Begin, and it was decided to establish a committee to determine the regulations concerning them. Each side had the right of veto on the regulations, he said.

Beilin accused Likud of "impudence" in opposing the peace accords. "You think if you sign an agreement it's alright, but if someone else signs the same agreement it's not alright," he charged.

Jon Immanuel adds: There was little Palestinian reaction to yesterday's conference on displaced persons from the Six-Day War, which was to set an agenda for talks rather than reach decisions.

Palestinian Authority Interior Ministry director-general Ahmad al-Tamimi said there were "priorities for return," which are thought to include wealthy Palestinians, those with homes to come to and entrepreneurs who would not require financial assistance and could contribute to the economy.

Palestinian sources said a joint Egyptian-Jordanian-Palestinian working paper called for the return of 8,000 displaced persons from 1967 ahead of an agreement.

Al-Kabariti on Christopher Tour, Ties With PLO
NC0903091695 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 9 Mar 95

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, in Amman, by Fawzi al-Jundi, in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Jundi] With the start of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's eleventh Middle East tour, talk of U.S. determination to activate the Middle East peace process has been confirmed. On the telephone line between Cairo and the Jordanian capital, Amman, we have Jordanian Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti. We welcome him to the Voice of the Arabs.

[Al-Kabariti] Thank you.

[Al-Jundi] Could we start our dialogue by discussing U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's new tour of the region? This tour takes place amid numerous developments in the Middle East, particularly with regard to the stalemate on the Syrian track and the difficulties before the Palestinian track. How does the Jordanian side view this new tour by the U.S. secretary of state?

[Al-Kabariti] We feel the peace process has taken a turn that can only be described as dangerous, stemming from the frozen peace process—a turn that is particularly dangerous for the Palestinian and Syrian-Israeli tracks. We hope the U.S. secretary will, this time round, offer some serious proposals through which we can activate the peace process and give it momentum to enable it to continue, despite the election pressures in the Israeli and U.S. arenas.

[Al-Jundi] It is known that this tour comes at a time when Jordan has achieved a peace treaty with Israel and numerous steps have been taken toward implementing this agreement. Could we claim that Jordan, under the circumstances, is fully prepared to play a clear mediating role between Israel and the Arab sides?

[Al-Kabariti] First, when Jordan signed the peace agreement with the Israeli side, it did so as a result of its conviction that what has been achieved through the negotiations did not clearly reflect the existing imbalance between Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan [sentence as heard]. Our conviction is that what was realized is, in fact, in the interest of the Jordanian side. We believe that the peace agreement is a national and pan-Arab achievement. It was not our intention to try to establish for ourselves an additional role to that of realizing our interests and retrieving our rights. But if we find that it is appropriate through coordination with our sister Egypt—we recognize and appreciate the basic, important, and great role Egypt plays as a result of its potential, size, resources, knowledge, and awareness regarding every aspect of the peace process—we will hold

back no effort and will support any Arab effort to enable that side to realize the objectives it wants.

[Al-Jundi] In this dialogue we shall touch on many issues. Recently a conference was held in Amman to discuss the problem of the Palestinian evacuees. You, the Egyptian foreign minister, the Israeli foreign minister, and Dr. Nabil Sha'th from the Palestinian side participated in this conference. The objective of this conference was to take specific measures with regard to the return of the Palestinian evacuees to their villages and homes. Did this conference realize the objective for which it convened?

[Al-Kabariti] This conference had two objectives and it realized one of them. It failed to realize the second objective. As for forming the standing committee, the conference emerged with an agreement on this. But it did not establish clear ground for the mechanism and scheduling of the return of the evacuees.

[Al-Jundi] Minister, regarding Jordanian-Israeli relations, especially now that Jordanian-Palestinian disagreement over the Jerusalem issue has calmed down, reports say that you intend to visit Gaza City during the coming weeks. Could you fill us in on the details of this?

[Al-Kabariti] A Jordanian Foreign Ministry delegation visited Gaza City to see the situation there and to assess the possibility of renting a building for the Jordanian mission. The delegation has presented its report. We will send a second delegation to rent office space. As soon as the offices are ready, I will visit Gaza. I am looking forward to this visit and to meeting Palestinian officials. Jordanian-Palestinian relations are the basis for the pan-Arab trend of Jordan's foreign policy. We believe that Jordan and Palestine could offer each other, and other countries, a great deal through cooperation, coordination, and the trust between them.

[Al-Jundi] Does this mean that the differences in opinion regarding the status of Jerusalem have taken on a different aspect during the current stage?

[Al-Kabariti] The Jordanian stance has now become clear and frank. We stand alongside the Palestinian brothers and support them in establishing their state on their territory and in making Arab Jerusalem their capital. The issue of Jerusalem is left up to the final stage of negotiations. When these negotiations are finalized, and when the Palestinians can impose and practice their sovereignty over the city of Jerusalem, Jordan will be the first country to bless and support this move.

[Al-Jundi] Before ending this dialogue, we want to pose an important question. In your time as Jordanian foreign minister, it has become clear that there has been a prominent Jordanian policy to strengthen relations between Amman and Cairo. This constitutes a strong and united Arab move to serve Arab action and activate the peace process.

[Al-Kabariti] Egypt remains the gateway of the Arab world. Egypt is Jordan's big sister and neighbor. In

Jordan, and among my generation in particular, we are accustomed to always seeing his majesty the king and President Mubarak next to each other, consulting and cooperating with each other to realize the strategic interests and national security of the Arab nation. When we seek Egypt's advice, it is like seeking the advice of a big brother. I believe that relations now are on the required level, rising to meet the challenges the Arab nation is facing. We will work to strengthen these relations. God willing, on 16 March the higher committee will meet under the chairmanship of the prime ministers of the two countries, and we will be your guests.

[Al-Jundi] We welcome you to your second homeland, Egypt, and conclude this dialogue. Thank you, Jordanian Foreign Minister 'Abd- al-Karim al-Kabariti.

[Al-Kabariti] Thank you.

Says 'Let Down' on U.S. Debt Relief

JN0903081395 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
9 Mar 95 p 1

[Article by Ghadir Tahir]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Foreign Minister Abd al-Karim al-Kabariti, describing the period ahead as a test of American and Israeli intentions, warned Wednesday [8 March] that time was running out for making tangible progress in deadlocked Middle East peace talks as Israel and the U.S. head into an election year in 1996.

Mr. al-Kabariti, who will host U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher next Monday, questioned the credibility of the Clinton administration's role in the peace process and criticised the U.S. for reneging on commitments to Jordan to cancel its debt to Washington.

"We have a six-month window of opportunity to make real progress in the peace process," said Mr. al-Kabariti. "If progress is not made in the next six months, then it would be very hard to reach anywhere because both the Israeli government and the U.S. Administration will face election pressures limiting their options in the peace process," Mr. al-Kabariti told the JORDAN TIMES.

Israel faces a general election next year while the U.S. enters the race for the presidency at the same time.

"I am concerned with the overall status of the peace process ... what is taking place on the Palestinian-Israeli track is very frustrating," said Mr. al-Kabariti, who on Tuesday hosted the first Arab-Israeli talks on the fate of hundreds of thousands of displaced Palestinians—one of the thorniest issues of the peace process. "If matters remain the way they are there is no great hope in achieving tangible progress on the peace tracks before the Israeli elections."

Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres blocked substantial progress in the four-party talks fuelling a sense of crisis in the already stalled Middle East peace talks.

Since Mr. Christopher's last visit to the region three months ago, the deadlock in the peace process has intensified. Israel is at deep odds with the Palestinians and Syria in peace negotiations and with Egypt over the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Mr. al-Kabariti, who is expected to accompany His Majesty King Husayn to the United States at the end of the month for talks with President Bill Clinton, said failure to implement the articles of the Israeli-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) declaration of principles would negatively affect Israel's peace talks with Syria and Lebanon.

"We hope that the Israelis will adhere to their original peace mandate" on whose basis Arabs agreed to join the Middle East peace process in 1991, he added.

Mr. al-Kabariti, questioning the U.S. role in the peace process as an effective partner, said he was not encouraged by the present situation.

"The U.S. Administration's credibility as a full and effective partner in the peace process and its effectiveness in influencing the course of events in the world arena through pressure, incentives and encouragement is now under scrutiny," said Mr. al-Kabariti. "What we see today is not encouraging. We hope this will not continue."

"I believe this is a period to test Israel's intentions," Mr. al-Kabariti said. "In reality, what is happening on the Palestinian track is a sign of the failure of (Israel's) intentions in implementing articles" of the declaration of principles, he said.

Mr. al-Kabariti said the Kingdom was disappointed about the U.S. failure to honour its commitments to Jordan.

"We feel let down by the administration and other American institutions over the debt relief and the failure to so far include Jordan in the 1996 assistance programme," said Mr. al-Kabariti.

A House of Representatives Sub-committee recently slashed to \$50 million an administration request for \$275 million in outlay to write off up to \$488 million in outstanding Jordanian official debts to the U.S. Jordan is also concerned about the amount of assistance the U.S. will give the Kingdom to help it meet the challenges of the peace era.

The U.S. Administration has reportedly requested only \$43 million in military and economic aid to Jordan in the draft budget for fiscal 1996—a small amount compared to the \$2.5 billion economic and military aid requested by Jordan.

House Official Hopes for Change in U.S. Debt Stand

JN0903102595 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 8 Mar 95
p 3

[Article by Linda Ma'ayi'ah]

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur, chairman of the House of Representatives' Foreign Relations Committee, has said the decision by the U.S. House of Representatives' Appropriations Committee regarding Jordan's debts is amenable to reconsideration in the upcoming phase. He hopes the Jordanian Government and parliament will contact U.S. officials to bring about a change in the U.S. stand. He also hopes the upcoming visit to Jordan by the U.S. vice president will produce a solution to this issue.

In a statement to AL-ASWAQ, al-Nusur added that the handling of this issue will influence the regional peace process. He went on to say: It is a fact that the U.S. Administration does not control the Congress. It is not true that U.S. President Clinton dictates his wishes to the Congress. In the same vein, it is untrue that the Congress dictates its wishes to the U.S. Administration. Decisions are made cooperatively by the two sides. They hold a dialogue on the issues under consideration and seek the views of experts in various areas. Consequently, we should not confuse the stands of the U.S. Government and the Congress.

Al-Nusur said: On several occasions, the U.S. President has expressed his determination to help Jordan, as well as his firm convictions in this regard. He did so in July, when the Washington Declaration was announced, and also in October, when he visited the region to attend the signing ceremony of the Jordanian-Israeli agreement in Wadi al-Arabah, and addressed the Jordanian parliament. Nonetheless, when he addressed the Jordanian parliament, President Clinton made no clear promises regarding Jordan's debts. Moreover, when Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti recently returned from Washington, he said the U.S. Administration is determined to write off \$275 million of Jordan's debt this year, and \$275 million next year. This is the policy line of the U.S. Administration.

As for the two houses of the Congress (the Senate and the House of Representatives), so far they have not made a decision in this regard. However, the U.S. House of Representatives' Appropriations Committee has made a tentative decision about Jordan's debts. This decision is amenable to reconsideration in the future. We do not overlook the fact that the arrangements endorsed by this committee must be approved by the two houses of the Congress. This leaves room for hope that the Jordanian Government and parliament will hold contacts with U.S. officials to bring about a change in this stand.

The Jordanian Government and parliament can make useful and perhaps crucial efforts toward that end.

When asked if the government has submitted questions to the United States about debts, al-Nusur said: Undoubtedly, the Jordanian Government is interested in this issue. I have no doubt that this issue will be raised in the high-level talks that will be held with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who will begin a visit to Cairo today. Besides, U.S. Vice President Al Gore will

begin a tour of the region in mid-March, during which he will visit six Middle Eastern countries, including Jordan. This tour will provide an opportunity for his majesty the king, his highness the crown prince, the prime minister, and other officials to bring up this issue in their talks with the U.S. vice president.

When asked if the Congressional decision on the debt can be deemed an instance of the United States going back on promises it has made to Jordan, manifestly expressed in the speech President Clinton delivered at the Jordanian Parliament, particularly when he said "We will not let you down," al-Nusur said: This is not a clear and manifest instance of a failure on the part of the U.S. President to keep a promise he made. The party responsible for this new development is the U.S. Senate, particularly the Republican majority that is controlling the Congress. Nonetheless, this does not absolve Clinton of responsibility, because there are other ways in which he can aid Jordan. We only have to remember the efforts he has made to help Mexico with \$50 billion in the face of opposition from the Congress. He managed to ensure this huge amount within a few days. We should remember that the U.S. debts owed by Jordan and scheduled to be written off this year amount to less than 0.5 percent of this huge amount. Moreover, there is a big difference between writing off a dead debt and extending an aid package of \$50 billion in a single stroke.

As regards the impact of the stand of the U.S. Congress on the future of the peace process, especially because it would promote the position of the Jordanian opposition and give it further credence, Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur said: It goes without saying that this will affect the continuation of the regional peace process. This is because the U.S. position has shown that the Republicans' willingness to shun U.S. commitments could make the sustainment and promotion of peace hostage to fluctuations, turmoil, heightened tension, and extremism. The mere signing of agreements is not important. What is important is that the peoples of the region reach the conviction that the agreements reached will work to their advantage, improve their quality of life, and properly address the deteriorating economic conditions brought about by many long years of conflict and war. It is extremely important for the parties called "cosponsors of the peace process" to realize that sponsorship does not end when the ink used to sign agreements dries. The sponsorship of the peace process must be a continuous and comprehensive process so that all difficulties, particularly in the area of economics, can be addressed.

Al-Nusur denied that the departure for the United States by a joint delegation of the House of Representatives and the Senate is connected to the Congressional decision, saying that the delegation's visit was scheduled before the issuance of the Congress decision.

Paper: French Diplomat Attack Prompts Security Fears

JN0803135395 Paris AL-MUHARRIR in Arabic 6 Mar 95
p 4

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Amman—AL-MUHARRIR—The state of panic and concern continued among Western diplomatic sources in Amman following the armed attack on Gilles Hein, second secretary at the French Embassy in Jordan, by two people suspected of being Islamic extremists.

Although the official statement on the attack tried to belittle the dangers and to rule out any political reasons or an Islamic plan behind the attack, Western diplomatic missions, however, out tightened security measures in place to protect their members.

Amid the secrecy shrouding the security inquiry, high-ranking sources at the Jordanian Foreign Ministry revealed to AL-MUHARRIR that the two assailants, Salim 'Abdallah and Ahmad al-Qasim, first tried to kidnap the French diplomat and to force him to get into their car. However, they could not kidnap him because security patrolmen were passing by at that time. The sources believe the two persons, who were arrested, have organizational relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood. This is despite the fact that the initial inquiry, as

the sources said, shows that they carried out the attack without any instructions from the Brotherhood leadership and that they clashed with the diplomat because he was eating in public during the month of Ramadan.

In another development, AL-MUHARRIR has learned that the attack on the French diplomat came after official Israeli and Palestinian accusations had been leveled against Jordan for sponsoring what has been described as Islamic terrorist movements, particularly Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. An Arab diplomatic source said that these accusations were made during the Washington meeting attended by the Jordanian foreign minister, in addition to the foreign ministers of the United States, Egypt, Israel, and the Palestinian self-rule authority.

Jordanian Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti did not deny that such accusations were made. However, he told AL-MUHARRIR that he informed the foreign ministers who were attending the Washington meeting that saying that Hamas is stationed in his country is baseless. He noted that, in Jordan, there is the Muslim Brotherhood, which is represented in the Parliament by 17 deputies, and that the Muslim Brotherhood complies with the Constitution and laws in its work. [passage omitted]

Al-Hirawi, al-Asad Discuss 'Deteriorating' South Situation

NC0803175995 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The deteriorating situation in the south was the subject of discussion today in a telephone conversation between Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad. They reviewed the Israeli violations and naval blockade amid the continuing helicopter flights over the Lebanese territories.

Al-Murr Discusses Attacks, 'Seige' in South

NC0803211695 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 2000 GMT 8 Mar 95

[New conference by Interior Minister Michel al-Murr with unidentified correspondents after the Council of Ministers' session on 8 March; place not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [al-Murr] The Council of Ministers held its weekly session upon the invitation of the prime minister. His excellency the president chaired the cabinet session. The president talked about the ongoing attacks and siege in the south. The president underlined the steadfastness being demonstrated by the southerners and the Lebanese vis-a-vis the Israeli pressures and encroachments on the citizen and land. The president added that Lebanese citizens will never submit to such pressures. Therefore, we all must side with the people of the south, because Israel cannot use such measures to exert pressure to achieve its objectives.

In support of the southerners, the president told the Council of Ministers that he will address the Chamber of Deputies on 14 March. The prime minister called for a cabinet meeting in al-Nabatiyah on 14 March. In other words, after the Chamber's session, the Council of Ministers will leave for al-Nabatiyah to convene a session there.

The president addressed thanks to the EU over its recent stand on Lebanon, particularly the EU's emphasis on the implementation of Resolution 425. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] [Question indistinct]

[Al-Murr] The Foreign Ministry held contacts in the past. But these contacts have not yet achieved any tangible progress. At any rate, our contacts will continue at the international level through our ambassadors and through the foreign envoys accredited to Lebanon to resolve this current situation.

[Correspondent] Will Lebanon lodge a complaint with the UN Security Council?

[Al-Murr] I wonder what the use is of lodging a complaint at present. The cabinet did not touch on this issue today. We will wait for 14 March, when all the Lebanese

will demonstrate solidarity on this national day, to see what developments might crop up. In light of these developments the cabinet will decide on the issue.

[Correspondent] [Question indistinct]

[Al-Murr] They have not yet conveyed a clear stand to us. I said that the Foreign Ministry has made contacts and efforts are underway to lift the siege.

[Correspondent] Did any member of the Council of Ministers oppose the holding of the cabinet session in al-Nabatiyah?

[Al-Murr] Nobody was opposed.

[Correspondent] [Question indistinct]

[Al-Murr] Minister Junblatt did not attend the session. None of those who attended the session has opposed the idea. As far as I know, no one opposed the holding of the session in al-Nabatiyah. [passage omitted]

Israeli Attacks in South, Beirut Overflights Reported

Aircraft Said Strafing Hizballah Command

TA0803160795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1600 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] First to this report just in from south Lebanon:

Hizballah this afternoon launched katyusha rockets and mortar shells at SLA [South Lebanese Army] outposts in the Jazzin area of the security zone. In response, the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and SLA are shelling Hizballah positions in the al-Biqa' Valley and Tuffah region and Israeli planes are said to be strafing Hizballah headquarters in Beirut. No casualties have been reported.

Shelling, Death Toll Detailed

NC0803192995 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The security situation in the south was noticeably hot today amid resistance operations and artillery duels between the resistance and the Israeli Army.

According to the latest reports, at 1750 today a resistance unit attacked the Israeli Army post in al-Dabshah with machine guns and rockets. Our correspondent in the south says two Israeli helicopters took part in the military operations and strafed Jabal 'Ali al-Tahir and the hills overlooking al-Nabatiyah City and the surrounding villages with their heavy-caliber machine guns.

Israeli military aircraft flew at low altitude over al-Nabatiyah and Iqlim al-Tuffah this afternoon.

Also this afternoon, the villages of Bra'shit and Shaqra and the suburbs of Majdal Silm and Khirbat Silm in the

central sector came under intermittent artillery fire from Israeli positions inside the occupied border strip.

The Islamic resistance announced that it attacked an Israeli assembly point in Bra'shit this afternoon, scoring direct hits.

The resistance detonated an explosive charge on the al-Mashnaqah Road near Saydun in Jazzin in an attack on a Lahd forces [South Lebanese Army, SLA] patrol at noon today. There were no reports of casualties.

Hizballah claimed responsibility for an attack on Taw'-amat Niha post this morning, saying it killed and wounded a number of Israeli troops. Hizballah also claimed responsibility for a clash yesterday evening between a resistance unit and a Lahd forces patrol in Shihin in the western sector. Three Lahd personnel were wounded in the clash, according to the Hizballah statement.

There were reports that the al-Hamra' Crossing, al-Litani River basin, and the outskirts of Shaqra and Yatar towns and Wadi al-Saluqi came under Israeli shelling, which later covered the Abu Rashid hills, Birkat Jabbur, Jabal al-Dahr in Western al-Biqa', and al-Qatranah hills east of Jazzin.

AFP says Hizballah is stepping up its security measures around party officials' homes in Ba'labakk and nearby areas. The agency added that Hizballah members are preventing cars from parking near the homes of party officials.

Meanwhile, Lebanese security agencies report that 85 attacks were made on the Israeli army and Lahd forces in February, a record number in a single month since Israel established the occupied border strip.

According to AFP's count, these attacks killed seven fighters and wounded eight others, while the Israeli retaliatory shelling killed seven civilians and wounded 22 others.

According to the security sources' statistics, an Israeli soldier was killed and four others wounded and two Lahd forces personnel were killed and four others wounded. The attacks also killed three resistance men.

Naval Blockade Said Tightening

NC0903070995 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 9 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] According to reports from south Lebanon, Israeli acts of aggression continued all last night. Israeli military aircraft flew over the south and Israeli reinforcements have been brought to the occupied border strip to augment agent Lahd's militia [South Lebanese Army].

Israeli military aircraft last night flew over Beirut and its suburbs for the third night in a row. In the meantime, Israel is tightening its naval blockade of the Lebanese

coast, triggering apprehension about a large-scale Israeli aggression aimed at pressuring Lebanon to disengage the Lebanese and Syrian tracks in the peace talks, robbing Lebanon of the resistance card, and confusing Lebanon's internal situation.

Further on Bombardment of South Areas

NC0903082695 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 9 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli acts of aggression against the south have not stopped. According to reports from the south this morning, the Israeli forces have pounded various villages in the eastern, western, and central sectors. The Israeli forces directed 155-mm and 105-mm rounds at the outskirts of al-Nabatiyah al-Fawqa, the Lebanese Army's deserted barracks, al-Maslakh quarter, and the outskirts of Kafr Tibnit, Kafr Rumman, Zawtar al-Gharbiyah, and Zawtar al-Sharqiyah. Israeli warplanes flew low and staged mock raids over the villages in the al-Nabatiyah and Iqlim al-Tuffah areas and strafed nearby hills. The barrage covered Zawtar al-Sharqiyah, Mazra'at al-Hamra', Yuhmur, al-Shaqif, and the al-Litani river basin. In addition, the Israeli forces shelled the outskirts of Bra'shit, Shaqra, and Tibnin from their positions in Muhaybib inside the occupied border strip. The bombardment lasted for one hour and caused damage to crops and triggered panic among the people in the area.

In the eastern sector, the bombardment covered 'Ayn al-Tinah, the woods between Mashgharah and 'Ayn al-Tinah, and Jabal al-Dhar hills. The Israeli warplanes yesterday launched mock raids and air raids on the area and were confronted by Lebanese Army antiaircraft fire.

According to security sources, the Israelis have brought vehicles, artillery pieces, and personnel to the occupied area of western al-Biqa'. The Islamic Resistance announced that yesterday its fighters repulsed an attempt by a Zionist force to infiltrate into the al-Nabatiyah outskirts.

Christopher Tour, Halt in Negotiations Viewed

NC0903115595 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 9 Mar 95

[From the "Spotlight on Events" program: "Christopher and the Concluding Tour"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher today starts a tour of the region in an attempt to move the settlement negotiations a few steps forward. U.S. sources, along with Zionist intelligence, played down the results this tour could achieve even before it started. A ranking U.S. official said Washington has no good ideas for bridging the gap between the Syrian and the Israeli sides. But Washington hopes the tour will bring viewpoints closer on some basic pending issues. Some observers believe that Christopher's tour

will perhaps be the last to the region, because both Washington and Tel Aviv are awaiting two new developments: the presidential elections in the United States and general parliamentary elections in the Zionist entity. These experts believe that Christopher's tour might be the last chance to save the negotiations from collapse, and that if the tour fails, things will be postponed until after the elections, that is, put off until 1997. As a result, the region will enter a stage of tension and immobilization.

Whether or not this is Christopher's last tour, the reality, as some informed people have revealed, confirms that negotiations have reached a deadend. This reality also indicates that current moves are linked with U.S. and Israeli elections more than they are linked with the negotiations themselves. Ideas and initiatives that are being presented now are being used to serve the sides in their elections, not to serve developments in the negotiating process.

Informed people believe that there is a prevalent conviction now that no new breakthrough can be made in the negotiations. The main concern is to concentrate on maintaining the results to date and protecting them from collapse, whether through giving them the required boost or through applying pressure on those who oppose the agreements to prevent them from [word indistinct].

Christopher's tour, according to these informed people, will concentrate—in addition to giving the general impression that the United States continues to pay attention to the settlement process—on two major issues: Curbing the opposition forces and tightening the noose around them, and rallying the forces that support the Oslo agreement to facilitate its application. Although there are huge obstacles before the two issues, Washington is trying to use and to activate some opportunities in this direction. The U.S. Administration is trying to eliminate the Egyptian-Israeli disagreement over the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, especially as this disagreement reflected negatively on the Palestinian-Israeli

negotiations and stopped the Egyptian regime from doing what it usually does—applying concentrated pressure on the Palestinian side to make more concessions to Israeli demands and conditions.

Washington also started striving to make Riyadh play a funding role to facilitate the implementation of the Self-Rule Authority, when it became clear that lack of financial support was one of the obstacles to implementing the agreement. As for [word indistinct] on the opposition, Washington, following the Cairo four-way meeting that condemned terrorism, is now trying to put pressure on 'Arafat to take stricter measures against the Palestinian Islamic Resistance. Washington is also trying to spur Lebanon and Syria on to get rid of their Resistance card, or at least freeze it, under the pretext that the tension has started threatening to turn the tables and that there is no hope of asking Israel to stop its excesses other than in return for stopping and freezing the activities of the Resistance. This explains the Israeli escalation ahead of Christopher's tour, and acknowledges that Israel, which now believes the negotiations are postponed, will try through cooperation with Washington to change the tacit understanding of July [1993] [reached between Hizballah and Israel following the a week of air raids by the Israeli airforce on Hizballah strongholds and Lebanese villages]. Keeping the understanding in place means that Israel will be subjected to great attrition, which it cannot sustain.

These informed people say the objective of the visit by the enemy government members to the occupied strip was to secure the loyalty of Lahd's men and to convince some sides inside the Zionist government who oppose supporting this group to accept the support. There are voices inside the Zionist government calling for stopping wagers on Lahd and the occupied strip. This was confirmed through statements made by Zionist Knesset members describing Antoine Lahd as a traitor when he visited them in the Knesset. One of these members shouted: See who our security depends on.

Kaddam, Others Attend Revolution Anniversary Rally

JN0803192795

[FBIS Editorial Report] Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic, in a link-up with Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic, at 1500 GMT on 8 March begins a live speech rally at the auditorium of the Damascus University, marking the 32d anniversary of the 8 March 1963 revolution.

The master of ceremonies begins the rally by glorifying the occasion. He then introduces Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, who is deputizing for President Hafiz al-Asad on the occasion; Vice President Muhammad Zuhayr Mashariqah; 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party; Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah; Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi; Sulayman Qaddah, assistant regional secretary of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party; and other senior state and Ba'th Party officials. The attendees stand for one minute and sing the Ba'th Party's anthem in honor of the souls of the Arab nation's martyrs.

At 1510 GMT, Mustafa al-'Ayid, chairman of the General Federation of Peasants, begins to deliver his 18-minute speech on behalf of popular organizations and professional associations. Al-'Ayid extols the 8 March 1963 revolution, which brought Syria back on the track of development, pride, and victory. He says that the 8 March 1963 revolution was the catalyst for mobilizing the people's resources and potential. He commends the accomplishments achieved under the Ba'th Party in Syria, particularly in the area of agriculture, dam construction, and land reclamation. He notes that Syrian peasants now enjoy decent housing and health benefits. He lavishes praise on the "historic leadership" of President Hafiz al-Asad, arguing that he set the course for the revolution and promoted national cohesion.

At 1530 GMT, poet Rida Rajab begins to recite an 18-minute poem on the occasion. He glorifies Syria under President al-Asad.

At 1550 GMT, Safwan Qudsi, leader of the Arab Socialist Union Party and member of the Central Command of the National Progressive Front, begins to speak on behalf of the National Progressive Front. In his 24-minute speech, he commends President Hafiz al-Asad and the Corrective Movement he led in November 1970, as well as his handling of regional and international developments. He contends that al-Asad has turned Syria into an influential regional player.

The speeches are interspersed with chants for President al-Asad.

At 1615 GMT, Vice President 'Abd-al-Khaddam, who is deputizing for Syrian President al-Asad on the occasion, begins to deliver the speech of the Arab Socialist Ba'th

Party. After he concludes one hour later, the attendees stand once again to sing the Ba'th Party's anthem.

Khaddam Addresses Rally

JN0803200095 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 8 Mar 95

[Speech by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam at a rally marking the 32d anniversary of the 8 March 1963 revolution, at the auditorium of Damascus University—live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Comrades, brother citizens: On the 32d anniversary of the inception of the revolution, I convey to you the best greetings and wishes of the leader of the 8 March Revolution, the comrade secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, President Hafiz al-Asad [applause] who led the revolution under difficult circumstances, in light of serious challenges, and with a firm will, clear vision, and pride in the national and pan-Arab dignity. [passage omitted]

The liberation of land is a task which must be served by all other tasks. We have no choice but to work to restore the land which was occupied by the Israeli enemy. The progress and the huge achievements we have made will remain incomplete and meaningless under the continued occupation. We should realize that building and reinforcing our defense capabilities is a major and essential issue. There will be no sanctity to any land which owners cannot defend, and there is no freedom for any people who do not have the capabilities to deter aggression. There will be no stability in light of constant fear of invasion and aggression, there is no security in the absence of a force to deter, no peace between the weak and the strong, and no free will for a people who do not have the elements of power. We should turn the process of building the national fence into a national responsibility which we should assume without hesitation. Although it has signed peace treaties with three Arab parties, Israel has continued to develop its combat capabilities despite what it has in its arsenal and its huge military industries. Israel uses Iran and Libya as a pretext. If Israel is continuing to stockpile weapons out of fear of Iran and Libya—which are far away, how can we neglect building our defense capabilities when it is close to us and is occupying parts of our land?

Brothers and comrades: We want to achieve peace based on the international legitimacy. We have accepted all peace initiatives, the last of which was the U.S. initiative. We have made great efforts which were obstructed by Israel's stands. Israel wants land, security, and peace together. The Israelis should read history well, modern and ancient history. Peace which was imposed by force and accepted as a result of weakness has never been a true or lasting peace. Suspicious peace deals involving the relinquishment of rights and national interests cannot last. The 17 May 1983 Agreement between Lebanon and Israel must be an example and a lesson. Agreements which do not guarantee rights and justice do

not give peace to its strong party or security to its weak party. When Israel tries to exploit its military force to achieve gains at the negotiations, it should realize that the issue of military supremacy is not constant, and that the concept of force varies in accordance with the capabilities and resources of each party. Peace between the strong and the weak is not peace.

A few days ago, an Israeli official made a statement in which he said that 'Arafat is weak. He added: Why should we continue negotiations with a weak man? He asked him to prove that he is strong. The required proof here is to slaughter Palestinians. Only then will he be strong. They realize that the slaughter of every Palestinian will lead to further steadfastness, further resistance, further patience, and further rancor against the enemy and its tools. [applause]

Brothers and comrades: We have accepted the U.S. peace initiative because we feel that we are capable of resisting pressure, and we will not abandon our rights. Our position is unequivocally clear. Withdrawal to the 4 June 1967 borders, and withdrawal from the occupied Lebanese territories is the basic condition for establishing peace in the region. The Israelis must realize that no aggressor has managed to keep the fruits of his aggression forever, and all suspicious or humiliating agreements have been the basis of a revolution or war. No party in history—defeated because it relinquished the rights and interests of its country—has been able to defend these relinquishments and concessions.

The Israelis should stop their pressure on Lebanon, their siege, and their aggressive actions. Such actions will never undermine the steadfastness of the Lebanese people and their national unity. These actions will never halt the disintegration of Lahd's army and will not be able to stop the resistance as long as the occupation remains on an inch of the Lebanese land. [applause]

The peoples' rights and the national soil are not commodities that a ruler can give as a gift because the peoples are the parties that will last. Although all members of the international community are aware that Israel obstructs the peace march by the conditions it sets and its intransigent positions represented in its refusing to implement the resolutions of the international legitimacy, some foreign countries come to the Arab parties and ask them to help the Israeli Government concerning Israeli public opinion. What is the help demanded from the Arab side? What is the help demanded for the Israeli Government? It is a relinquishment of the rights, interests, and land.

Within such a concept, what do they want to tell us? They want to say that public opinion in Israel—although it is the aggressor and its forces are occupying Arab territories and repressing the Arab citizens—should be respected. What do they say to the Arab parties? They say that the public opinion in Israel has the freedom to do what it wants, but the public opinion in Arab countries has only repression and oppression until Israel gets what it seeks.

These mediators, who pretend to be innocent, should be aware that the public opinion in our countries is more sensitive about its land than the Israelis who commit aggression by occupying our land.

What encourages those foreigners is the fact that Arabs are wittingly or unwittingly adopting such statements without realizing the serious outcome of such a trend. It should be clear to everyone that Syria chose peace because the public opinion in Syria wants peace as an option. Syria and its leadership, as well as Syria's leader are well aware that the peace option is the one that will restore the territories and rights and maintain dignity. No one will be able to undermine our willpower, terrorize us, or push us toward something in which we have no faith or belief. [applause]

Brothers and comrades: There are dangers that threaten our identity and fate and require the March revolution to confront them because the loss of identity is the downfall of fate. When fate falls, right falls, the homeland is lost, and the nation falls into oblivion.

There is a poisoned and planned campaign which seeks to undermine the Arab identity, fragment inter-Arab relations, and cause detachment from pan-Arab affiliation. This campaign seeks to establish new relations which they call Middle Eastern relations. In this plan, Israel would have the leader's position and would be the common denominator.

The campaign launched against Arabism—which casts doubts on the unity of the Arab nation and is accompanied by a campaign against Islam—seeks to break what holds the people of this nation together. All Arab nationalists and Islamists must realize the dangers of these calls and confront them because they target existence and fate.

Within the framework of this scheme, a cultural invasion has begun to threaten our young generations to drive them to a state of loss, to a loss of identity, and to a separation between them and between our values, principles, civilization, culture, and heritage. When the generation loses its identity, it loses its interests in the issues of the homeland. When the citizens lose interests in the homeland, the homeland is lost and the citizens are lost.

This cultural invasion is being achieved through the various media organs—radio, television, cinema, videos, books, and magazines. This cultural invasion focuses on distorting this generation's cultural, ethical, and social values. At a time when they are depriving us of the technology we need, they are exporting to us through the media whatever distorts ethics, culture, and affiliation.

The responsibility to confront this campaign falls on all of us—including officials as well as popular, political and vocational organizations. This campaign must also be confronted at school, at the university, and within the family.

We must all work to protect this generation and to stand against these poisoned campaigns. We must immunize this generation with further education on the history of the Arab nation, on its values and principle, and what it offered the world in terms of civilization, culture, science, and knowledge.

The ultimate objective of those hostile campaigns is to strip the Arabs of their values and of everything that could support their steadfastness. They should be easy targets so it would be easy to control their homeland and resources. In parallel with this campaign, there is an intensive campaign to promote parochialism and to create the appropriate circumstances for stirring up conflicts to destroy the unity of Arab countries and the Arab nation.

Comrades and brothers: Zionism seeks to divide the Arab homeland and the Arab nation. It seeks to divide each village into several villages, each state into several states, and each family into several families. If it succeeds, it will be able to achieve the ultimate objective of Zionism.

Comrades: One of the main tasks which must be addressed by the March revolution is the current Arab situation. Foreign quarters stand behind inter-Arab conflicts. Those quarters have an interest in sowing differences and conflicts among Arabs. Those who care only for their own interests have been joining these campaigns, placing their own interests above the interests of their countries and above the interests of the entire Arab nation. They have failed to realize that disintegration of inter-Arab relations will not remain confined to the boundaries of those relations, but will necessarily lead to domestic disintegration within Arab countries. Zionism, which seeks to control the Arab homeland and its resources, is working to spread conflicts and create the appropriate circumstances for the continued deterioration in inter-Arab relations. Quarreling Arabs make easier targets. Unified Arabs committed to pan-Arab affiliation are more impregnable to their enemies and more useful to their friends. The current Arab situation cannot achieve security for any country. If the Arab nation loses its security, security will not be enjoyed by any part of it. In this context, what is taking place in the Arab arena should be an appropriate lesson.

Some parties rush, under foreign pressures, to deal with those who occupy our land and attack our people, is an abnormal situation which exacerbates and further complicates the Arab situation. Addressing and improving the Arab situation is a basic part of the concerns of his excellency the president, who anticipated before anybody else the nature of the current situation and the dangers of its continuation. Hence, there have been continuous contacts with a number of Arab leaders and there has been action to thwart the plans aiming to paralyze the Arab League. There have also been efforts to prevent new inter-Arab explosions.

Talking about the Arab situation, we must refer to the major responsibility of Arab popular organizations, professional unions, and political organizations. Whether they are pan-Arab, democratic, or Islamic organizations, they have a responsibility to work to halt the state of frustration and to confront the attempts to cause fragmentation and sow doubts. They also have a responsibility to work to create a popular trend throughout the Arab homeland for struggle to maintain the Arab identity and provide an appropriate atmosphere for realizing the dangers of the foreign role in general and the Zionist role in particular in the bad Arab situation.

The popular Arab forces must draft formulas for cooperation amongst themselves, set aside their contradictions, and employ the greater part of their efforts for the sake of the supreme goal.

Comrades and brothers: The great achievements scored by the March Revolution do not constitute the ambition of the Revolution or its leaders. They only constitute achievements on the path of achieving the greater ambition. What we have achieved has been great and helped us stand fast and continue the march to achieve the objectives of the Revolution. It enabled Syria to regain its leading position on both the Arab and world levels. However, Syria still has major tasks which we must work to achieve. These tasks were specified by the president in his speech to the People's Assembly in September of last year. Work must rise to the level of the ambition. We must all understand that we are not alone in this region. We are fighting an enemy who has huge resources that come from within and abroad. We must understand what this enemy has and what we must have. All of our actions, plans, efforts must be directed to achieve balance and, consequently, wrest the rights and achieve victory.

What we have achieved compared to what Syria had in the past is big, very big. But it is still smaller than what our ambitions require as we face the enemies and strive to build the Arab unity and liberate the Arab homeland.

The building of democracy, Comrades, has been one of the most important achievements of the 16 October [Corrective Movement]. Democratic institutions were established in the country, particularly the People's Assembly. Democracy, Comrades and Brothers, is not realized by electing the institutions, but by the institution exercising its role in accordance with the Constitution and the country's supreme interest. The People's Assembly's supervision of the government's action benefits the country. It benefits the assembly and the government. This is because supervision and accountability prevent any sliding toward mistakes and provide a motive for action. At this stage, the People's Assembly—as instructed by the president in his speech—is required to fulfill its constitutional right in terms of legislating, supervising, and accountability.

Work on entrenching the values of democracy in the country is imperative for our development and progress.

It is also imperative to unleash the potential energies, prevent deviations, and curtail mistakes. We have built a national economy in which we must take pride. Despite the fact that its burdens are larger than its resources, Syria managed to build a significant economic base. We must acknowledge the president's interest in the building of every factory and the reclamation of any land. [chants and applause] However, what we have built is not all we want to build because we have not yet achieved balance in the national economy. Achieving balance in the national economy is a comprehensive national responsibility because it is linked not only to the country's present; it is linked to its present, future, and the future of the entire Arab nation. Therefore, working to achieve balance in the national economy and providing the requirements needed to achieve the goal must be a national responsibility for the government, people, organizations, professional associations, and for every citizen in our country.

In the foreseeable future, we must achieve a balance between production and consumption, and between revenues and expenditure. At a later stage, we have to achieve a surplus in the national economy in order to promote the construction endeavor. We must take into account the fact that Syria's population will exceed 20 million in the next 10 years. We have made great developments in the field of agriculture and agricultural production. Nonetheless, this state-planned development endeavor, which was given all possible support, has not been matched with a marketing policy; and this has created a product surplus that could have negative effects. Hence, we must draw up domestic and foreign marketing policies so the country can reap the benefits of its massive agricultural development. Over the past few decades, we have managed to build a large public sector that constitutes the mainstay of the national economy. This sector is the key stabilizing factor in the economy and the community. We must give due attention to this sector, because a large part of the country's revenues and national wealth has been used to build this sector. We must work to promote the public sector and free it from bureaucratic constraints within the framework of a carefully examined program. Similarly, we must enhance the administrative and technical efficiency of our institutions. Efficiency, the ability to make contributions toward increasing production and marketing products, and eagerness to safeguard the public interest should be the yardsticks for choosing managers. [applause]

Retraining leaders within the public sector's management staff is a basic and urgent issue. This is one of the issues strongly underlined by his excellency the president. The country has seen a huge development in the field of industry. Tens of thousands of job opportunities have been created. The citizens' consumer commodities have also been made available. This has eased pressure on foreign imports.

In the next phase, we must seek to implement the president's instructions regarding the need to produce

raw materials at home, and to market them at home and in foreign markets. By so doing, we will create new job opportunities and increase the country's revenues. Moreover, we must pay attention to high tech industries and pave the way for new industries that would promote industrial efficiency in the country, augment revenues, and enhance our competitiveness in foreign markets.

Similarly, we must encourage the people with savings to invest in the national economy and also in new industries. We must not allow them to become easy prey for deceitful or fraudulent persons here or there.

Comrades: His excellency the president has given special attention to scientific research. This requires us to vigorously and forcefully implement his wishes in this regard at our universities, ministries, and factories. Moreover, we must set up specialized centers for research and studies.

This issue is crucial to the development of the country in all areas: in agriculture, industry, and education. We must also pay attention to vocational and technical education, and provide everything possible because education is necessary for promoting the structure of the community and improving the technical proficiency of our economic institutions.

We must foster the spirit of research within the hearts of our sons at all stages of education. Textbooks should not be their only source of information. Such a tendency would energize all our students at all stages of education.

Comrades and brothers: The National Progressive Front was one of the most salient accomplishments of the March revolution. It marked a significant development in the country's political life. Unilateralism in the partisan and political work has been replaced by pluralism. The National Progressive Front has made effective contributions toward the country's political life. At this stage, the National Progressive Front must shoulder greater responsibilities by working to promote domestic cohesion and national unity.

Because of the current international situation and the quest for domination and hegemony, the world feels a need for justice, fairness, and equality, and Third World peoples feel great dangers threatening their survival, economies, livelihoods, and sovereignty. In light of all of the above, the Arabs badly need to courageously search their souls and unify their stands toward these dangers. The Arabs are now in dire need of unity, particularly since the world will have no place for a divided nation or a weak people.

Comrades and brothers: Thirty two years have elapsed since the inception of the revolution. Nonetheless, the revolution has remained as lofty as its leader. [applause and chants] It has continued to address dangers, tempests, and hurricanes. It is inspired by the leadership of a confident person, the courage of a fighter, and the patience of a struggler.

We salute you, O comrade leader. May God's peace and mercy be upon you, O comrades and brothers. [applause and chants]

IRNA Official Warns Against Israeli 'Propaganda'

*LD0903141295 Tehran IRNA in English 0753 GMT
9 Mar 95*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Damascus, March 9, IRNA—The visiting deputy managing director of the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), Mohammad Hassan Jaafari, Wednesday night met with Syrian Information Minister Muhammad Salmane who warned against consequences of the influence of Israeli poisonous propaganda.

Salmane called on regional countries to be well prepared to seriously confront with the Zionist regime's news-propaganda war in future.

Praising the Islamic revolution for putting an end to the illegitimate presence of Israel in Iran, the Syrian minister stressed that Tel Aviv had employed all its propaganda potentials to encounter the Islamic Republic of Iran and Syria.

The Zionist regime resorted to the issue of Iran's nuclear energy as a pretext for not joining to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Salmane said.

Underling the need for the establishment of a common news front by the Islamic states against the Zionist regime, the minister underscored expansion of news cooperation between Iran and Syria.

Meanwhile, the IRNA official who arrived here last Sunday night, referred to the significance of news dissemination as a weapon to thwart propaganda conspiracies of the Zionist regime and outlined policies of the Islamic Republic News Agency in further awakening the Muslim public opinion both in the region and throughout the world.

Stressing the need for promotion of cooperation between IRNA and its Syrian counterpart, Jaafari said that such relations could prepare the ground for the establishment of an expanded Islamic cooperation.

The IRNA deputy managing director, heading a delegation, has so far visited several cultural and press institutions.

Afghanistan

Taleban Forces Prepare To Attack Kabul

Mazari Threatens Use of Scuds

LD0803131195 Tehran IRNA in English 1242 GMT
8 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Mar. 8, IRNA—Afghan religious students are bracing for attacking Afghan capital in the face of fierce fighting between forces loyal to President Borhanoddin Rabbani and those of Shiite Hezb-e Wahdat [Unity Party] in west Kabul, Afghan sources said here on Wednesday [8 March].

Taleban forces, positioned in Chahar Asiab, some 15 kilometers southwest of Kabul, have made certain movements giving strong indications for an offensive on Afghan capital, the sources said.

They said that military commander of President Rabbani, Ahmad Shah Mas'ud attacked positions of Hezb-e Wahdat in west Kabul on Monday to pre-empt support of Shiites for Taleban during their possible attack on Afghan capital.

Afghan government forces launched a severe attack on west Kabul that resulted in about 200 fatalities so far.

Meanwhile 'Abdol 'Ali Mazari, leader of Hezb-e Wahdat, has warned of firing Russian-made Scud missiles on Afghan capital if Rabbani forces did not halt their assault on Wahdat positions. He claimed to possess 20 Scuds and three rocket launchers adding that he had asked technicians from allied groups to rush to Kabul to help Wahdat fire the missiles. Wahdat exhibited Scuds during army parade last year.

Meanwhile, the Taleban are currently locked in severe battle with forces of Commander Isma'il, governor of Herat and Rabbani ally, in western Farah Province.

The Taleban that demand surrender of all Afghan groups to them shot into prominence last autumn when they captured southwestern Qandahar Province from local commanders.

Taleban Forces Launch First Offensive

BK0803163895 Hong Kong AFP in English 1549 GMT
8 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, March 8 (AFP)—The Islamic Taleban forces launched their first offensive against troops loyal to President Borhanuddin Rabbani Wednesday with an attack on the southwest of the capital Kabul, sources said.

The Taleban took up several positions that were held by Shi'ite Wahadat fighters, who had been engaged in fierce fighting for three days with Rabbani troops.

The Wahadat fighters had voluntarily given up their arms and positions in the southwest of the capital to the Taleban, who are led by Islamic students, said the Islamic Press Agency, the mouthpiece for mojahedin in Peshawar, Pakistan. From these positions, Taleban launched a ground offensive using tanks against the presidential forces.

The offense ended and calm descended on Kabul by late afternoon.

A presidential spokesman said some 20 Talebans had been killed and 26 were captured, along with a tank. This could not immediately be confirmed.

The spokesman said the Wahadat had surrendered to the Taleban to "avert their imminent defeat."

The three days of fighting between the Wahadat and Rabbani troops has left some 900 wounded and dozens dead.

It was not clear what part if any the Wahadat played in the latest round of fighting, if any.

An intense artillery barrage against the presidential positions preceded the Taleban attack. Sukhoi SU-22 jets were used to stop the Taleban advance.

The Taleban currently occupy the former Russian embassy, a Wahadat bastion close to the frontline, but the Wahdat have not completely evacuated their men who remain in some positions.

The spokesman also said that Fazalur Rahman, the head of the Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Islam (JUI), a small Pakistani religious party, was in Kabul Wednesday to negotiate with the Rabbani government on behalf of the Taleban.

Fazalur Rahman's name has often been cited as one of the founding personalities behind the Taleban together with Pakistan Interior Minister Nasrullah.

Islamabad has denied any involvement with the Taleban.

The Talebans reached the edge of Kabul after a succession of lightning victories against various factions fighting in Afghanistan. They have announced the intention of taking the capital and installing an Islamic order throughout Afghanistan.

The offensive followed bitter fighting earlier in the day in the capital when pro-Rabbani troops and the Wahadat skirmished along the frontline.

The city itself was subjected to one of the worst rockets attacks in recent months overnight, with dozens of people killed, according to Radio Kabul run by Rabbani loyalists.

The state radio said at least 30 people died and more than 50 were wounded in a rocket barrage landing in the centre of the city.

Witnesses said the Russian made Uragan rockets with multiple warheads also pounded other areas of the war torn capital late Tuesday.

One landed near the city's television tower while others hit Khairkhana district, killing at least two people, they said.

Radio Reports on First Attacks

LD0803172795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Taliban forces embarked on their first attack against Kabul today. Here is our correspondent, Khameneh, with a report:

[Khameneh] Taliban forces began their first attack against the forces of Borhanoddin Rabbani's government. An Afghan Foreign Ministry spokesman announced: Taliban forces, using tanks and military vehicles, attacked government forces in southwest Kabul. The ground attack by Taliban forces comes while an earlier warning by the group said if the fighting between the two warring sides in the Afghan capital does not end by tonight, it would intervene to stop the fighting and prevent further massacre of the people of Kabul.

Before that warning, in a rocket attack against Kabul last night, at least 60 lost their lives. Since 6 March, government forces have been attacking the positions of the Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami in southwest Kabul to seize control of the last positions of the government's opponents. However, Afghan sources report there has been no significant change in the positions of the two sides.

In the fighting between the government forces and those of the Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami, nearly 100 have been killed and a similar number wounded.

India

Diplomat Killings Said To Show Karachi 'Lawlessness'

Effects on Bhutto Visit Seen

BK0903122995 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 9 Mar 95

[Commentary by V. Sudarshan]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The killing of two American consulate staffers in Karachi by unidentified gunmen has served to focus international attention on the lawlessness that prevails in the commercial capital of Pakistan. More importantly, it will raise questions relating to terrorism that the Pakistan Government will find hard to evade in the coming month. The coming month is crucial because the Pakistani prime minister, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, is

scheduled to make an official visit to Washington exactly a month from now—the visit that has been long and meticulously planned.

The importance of the visit can be gauged from the fact that the visit has been scheduled in such a manner that the prime minister, Benazir Bhutto, arrives in Washington before the Congress adjourns and the law makers disperse. This means she gets to meet influential politicians and make a strong case on the need for a stronger American alliance with Pakistan. Viewed from that angle, the killing of American consulate staff will cause a great embarrassment both to Ms. Bhutto and the American policy makers who have insisted that Pakistan is a moderate Islamic nation. Going by events in the recent past in Karachi and Lahore, it is plain as daylight that this is a matter that remains firmly in the realms of some patently wishful thinking. The American State Department has already put out a statement saying that the killings of Americans is yet another reminder of the dangers we confront in the worldwide struggle against terrorism. The statement requires some elaboration.

It may be recalled that Pakistan has been taken off the watch list of those countries America considers as sponsoring terrorism. Curiously enough, the House of Representatives International Affairs Subcommittee on Asia-Pacific last month sought to know from the Clinton Administration whether or not Pakistan is a sponsor of terrorism. The context was the detail furnished by the Human Rights Watch which suggested complicity of Pakistan in the flow of arms from Afghanistan through Pakistan into Jammu and Kashmir. There has never been in any doubt that the weapons, mainly AK-47's which incidentally was the weapon used by the unidentified gunmen to kill the two American consulate staffers in Karachi, were finding their way into the hands of insurgents in Kashmir.

The assistant secretary of state, Robin Raphel, was candid enough to admit that Pakistan has been told to stop funneling arms and by implication terrorism into Kashmir. She also admitted that her entreaties had not had the desired affect. This is the clearest admission yet that the American Government policy makers have the impression that willy-nilly Pakistan does indeed sponsor terrorism. Under the normal circumstances, such an admission would result in the move in placing of Pakistan on the watch list of those countries suspected of sponsoring terrorism.

It is also worthwhile recalling that the recent arrest and extradition of Ramzi Yusuf, a suspect in the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center was caught and extradited from Islamabad in a swift operation. Washington has chosen not to make too much of the fact that Yusuf received his bomb making training in Peshawar, a former area headquarters of the Mojahedin who were then fighting to dislodge the Soviets from Afghanistan. Is it not a matter of some concern then, that a suspect in the World Trade Center bombing should while fleeing the

long arm of the American law seek to hide in Pakistan? When questioned by Congressman Gary Ackerman, who was earlier the chairman of the House of Representatives subcommittee on Asia-Pacific, the assistant secretary of state was at a loss for words and said rather lamely that these things as we all know happen around the world. Though there might be attempts by Pakistan as well as by the United States to make a common cause against terrorism, the latest killings of Americans in broad daylight at a busy intersection in Pakistan's commercial capital is going to be difficult to play down or brush aside.

Editorial Calls Killings 'Matter of Shame'

BK0903101395 Delhi THE PIONEER in English 9 Mar 95
p 8

[Editorial: "Karachi, again"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] It is a matter of shame for the Benazir Bhutto Government that the situation in Pakistan's commercial capital should so deteriorate that gunmen are able to shoot down employees of the US consulate almost at will. If this is the situation that obtains during what can be termed the morning rush hour traffic at a busy intersection barely a couple of kilometres away from the US consulate, it is not very difficult to imagine the conditions at other times in the rest of Karachi. While the steady spate of killings in Karachi—an average of ten a day—over the past year have elicited consternation in the region, Ms Benazir Bhutto has conveniently blamed India for it, closing down in the process the Indian consulate in Karachi. This theory has found no takers even inside Pakistan. The fact that the latest killings include Americans, and embassy staff at that, is sure to focus fresh international attention on a phenomenon that has so far been only a matter of some statistical interest to the West. The killing is also going to prove embarrassing both to the Pakistani establishment and to the Americans who have gone out of their way to accord Pakistan a pride of place in their New World Order.

This will also help define Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's trip to Washington exactly a month ahead. Policy-makers in the Pentagon, the State Department and the Defence Department [as published] are going to be hard put to explain to American senators and congressmen as to how in a country they have taken pains to declare a "moderate Islamic nation" can outlaws kill American citizens with such impunity. It is time American law makers realised that Pakistan does not quite add up to what American policy-makers make it out to be. There is practically no information yet on the identity or the motives of the gunmen, though the weapon they used has been identified as the AK-47, a ubiquitous legacy of America's and Pakistan's efforts to dislodge the Soviet Union from Afghanistan. It is likely that explanations will be forthcoming to the effect that the killings could in some way be connected to the extradition from

Islamabad of Ramzi Yusuf, a suspect of the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Centre in New York.

All this only adds to the gravity of the situation in Pakistan. That a suspect like Ramzi Yusuf should gravitate towards Pakistan in an attempt to seek sanctuary is a comment all by itself. Even given the previously demonstrated presence of anti-American feelings at the street level in Pakistan, it would be simplistic to assume that to be the sole reason behind the killings. In Pakistan, there is method in the madness, in other parts of the world there is a name for it: Terrorism. By the same token, if this had happened in most other countries of the world, America would have moved swiftly to put that country on what is called the Watch List. Whether that will happen in the case of Pakistan, to which the American approach is self-avowedly "even-handed", is anybody's guess.

Murders Tied to 'Fundamentalism'

BK0903101495 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in
English 9 Mar 95 p 13

[Editorial: "A Frankenstein"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan is between the devil of religious fundamentalism and deep sea of an obligation to act as a moderate Islamic country in defence of the interests of its Western benefactors. As a consequence of its dilemma, the fault line for a clash of civilisations as envisioned by Prof. Samuel Huntington of Harvard has moved dangerously close to South Asia. Not that Pakistan's neighbours in the region wear an image that is largely coloured by the West's Christian culture. But it is a region that has much to worry about religious fundamentalism. The growth of this menace had nothing to do with local disputes. However, having designated Islam as a creed that was potent enough to challenge the communist thrust into Afghanistan, it became necessary to promote the combative and aggressive aspects of the faith. Since 1979 when Soviet troops entered Kabul, Pakistan has been turned into the world's biggest nursery to raise Islamic militants. India had to bear a major brunt of it already in Kashmir. But the logic of religious terrorism can easily defy those who, like the ISI [Inter Services Intelligence], hope that they hold the key. Thus religious terrorists from Pakistan fanned out to distant Bosnia, which went unnoticed, but they also created havoc in Egypt and Algeria. The folly of leaving it to Pakistan to determine what is in the interest of Islam not only in Kashmir and elsewhere in India but in Afghanistan and other parts of the world with the newly-raised sect of Talebans reaching the southern fringe of Kabul will become apparent to Pakistan's Western benefactors soon.

As if to make sure that no one should wait long to see the real face of Pakistan's Islamic commitment has come the sad news about the assassination of two American diplomats by a gunman in Karachi on Wednesday. This may be a reprisal for the arrest of Ramzi Yusuf, an Iraqi

trained in Peshawar who allegedly masterminded the blasting of New York's World Trade Centre. Regardless of that, it is clear that Islamic militants in Pakistan are likely to target more Western diplomats and foreign nationals, much as terrorists have done in Egypt and Algeria to sharpen the division between Islam and the West. Sectarian violence in Pakistan at various levels, including that affecting the Muhajirs, has a distant possibility of affecting India as well. Ms Benazir Bhutto seems unable to comprehend the dangerous potential of the Islamic Frankenstein that her father's foe had created and which she appears reluctant to keep under control. The threat to India should make New Delhi watch carefully the course developments in Pakistan take. And, the US should urge Ms Bhutto to address herself to a problem that threatens regional stability. There cannot be a better occasion for it to do so than when Ms Bhutto visits the US next month.

U.S. Motives Questioned in TV Documentary

BK0803092095 Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi 7 Mar 95 p 6

[FBIS Translated Text] Presenting documentary evidence against a country like Pakistan which uses terrorism as a tool of diplomacy is not an ordinary event. In fact, it is unusual to present it in a documentary through the American TV network to American viewers. Details given by the special representative of the U.S. Congress, (?Joseph Bodanaski), about terrorism in this documentary may not be new to the Indian Government, but they contain many startling and important facts for the European Community. According to (?Bodanaski) in Pakistan, training in terrorism is provided at three levels. In the first level, not only Kashmiris but Bosnian, Arab and European terrorists are trained in ambush tactics in the camps. Among the trainees are also some U.S. guerrillas. In the second, terrorists are mainly trained in subversive activities and in unleashing violence in India, which is conducted by the Pakistan's intelligence agency itself. The training is quite rigorous and may extend to one year. The use of the latest weaponry is also taught. But what should worry European countries most is the third. This is where training is given in staging an international Islamic revolution and in spreading terror all around the world. (?Bodanaski) has branded this type of training as "specially sensitive". After training, these terrorists go out to indulge in subversive and terrorist activities in Bosnia, Africa, Arab countries, Algeria and even in the United States. Apparently, these trainees include citizens from all countries.

The U.S. has known about this all along, because this is not the first time it has come across (?Bodanaski's) claim. The statement of former U.S. Secretary of State Mr. James Baker bears testimony to the fact that the U.S. Government had warned Pakistan specifically against helping terrorists in Kashmir. The former CIA director, Robert Gates, in his report had earlier mentioned Pakistan as aiding and abetting terrorism. According to Mr. Baker, after this warning "Pakistan reduced its aid to

terrorists considerably. However, after 1992 it reverted to its old style and policies." The Chairman of the Republican Party's Research Committee, Mr. (McCollam) says "instead of being reduced, terrorists training camps in Pakistan are increasing with impunity and the Afghan role in conducting training is very important." Following this disclosure, the question raised is why has the U.S. been hiding Pakistan's nefarious role in these activities all this while. Despite knowing for the last two years about the increase in subversive activities of Pakistan-sponsored terrorism, why did the U.S. not declare Pakistan a terrorist state. If strategic and economic interests reign supreme, then why this sound for fury for human rights? Mr. Baker himself admits that Pakistan-trained terrorists support the very groups that are totally against the concepts of "individual rights, individual property, democracy and ideology of co-existence." So, what more proof does the U.S. require for gross violation of human rights? And, why this sudden documentary broadcast after years of silence, especially when Pakistan's Prime Minister Bhutto is likely to begin her state visit to the U.S.? Lest the U.S. intention should be to reach an agreement with Bhutto where the U.S. secures guarantees for the protection of its own interests and that of its allies!

Beryllium Components Now Produced for Space Use

BK0903073295 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 9 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Indian Space Research Organization and the Bhaba Atomic Research Center have produced high precision Beryllium components for space application. An official release in Bangalore says the joint effort has put India in a select band of countries which have this capability.

Iran

Russian Duma Deputy Speaker Mityurov Visits

Meets With Hasan Rowhani

LD0803172395 Tehran IRNA in English 1608 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 8, IRNA—The visiting deputy speaker of Russian Duma, Mikhail Mityurov, here Wednesday [8 March] said that Moscow in its obligations toward Iran will not be influenced by any foreign country.

Mityurov, who arrived here yesterday at the head of a ranking Russian parliamentary delegation, made the remark in a meeting with his Iranian counterpart, Hojjat ol-Islam Hasan Rowhani.

Underlining promotion of cooperation within the framework of the Caspian Sea littoral states cooperation

organization, Mityurov called the cooperation as a must for stability and calm in the region.

On Chechnya's crisis, the Russian official said that all the peaceful channels for settling the crisis had not been exhausted and there has been some mistakes in this regard.

He further expressed pleasure with his visit to Tehran and hoped that it will help further broadening of Tehran-Moscow parliamentary ties. The Russian official invited his Iranian counterpart to pay a visit to Moscow which was welcomed by Hojjat ol-Eslam Rowhani.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Rowhani called the current visit to Tehran, the first ever visit by a Russian parliamentary delegation, as an step which will result in new development in Tehran-Moscow cooperation.

He further called the 1989 visit to Russia of President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani as the turning point in the two countries' ties.

He called for further activation of the Caspian Sea littoral states organization and underlined parliamentary cooperation between the two countries in this regard.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Rowhani, who is also secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, expressed Iran and other Islamic countries' concern over the Chechen developments. He further stressed Iran's readiness to provide Chechen people with humanitarian aids.

He also said that Iran maintain that Chechen crisis has no military solution and that political solution is the best way to end the bloodshed.

He praised Moscow's commitment to its obligations toward Iran and said that Tehran maintains that the two countries share the common idea that other countries should not disturb bilateral relations.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Rowhani also expressed hope that bilateral relations will be further expanded as a result of the visits by President Yeltsin and Mityurov.

Rafsanjani Receives Mityukov

LD0803201095 Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in Persian 1900 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani today received Mikhail Mityukov, the first [deputy] speaker of the Russian [State] Duma.

At the meeting, the president described the grounds for the expansion of relations and cooperation between Iran and Russia as favorable and said that further negotiations, as well as the exchange of high ranking delegations between the two countries were needed in order to consolidate bilateral ties on the basis of mutual respect and common interests, particularly in the Caspian Sea region. He also welcomed the establishment of parliamentary ties between Iran and Russia.

Mityukov confirmed Russia's political will to expand its ties with Iran. He said: These two major neighboring countries can create satisfactory relations in the region. He explained his country's positions on regional issues and said: The Russian [State] Duma believes that holding political talks and finding peaceful solutions are the solution to regional problems such as the domestic conflicts in Chechnya and Karabakh.

Nateq-Nuri Discusses Nuclear Ties

LD0803180795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In a meeting today with Mikhail Mityukov, first deputy speaker of the Russian State Duma, Nateq-Nuri, speaker of the Islamic Consultative Majles, referred to the U.S. sensitivity toward Iranian-Russian cooperation and said: America and its allies are worried about the development of the region and are trying to stop regional cooperation under various pretexts.

He thanked Russia for its stance on nuclear cooperation with Iran and described Iran's use of the nuclear energy as peaceful. He said: Iran is a serious supporter of the nonproliferation of mass destructive weapons and never seeks to obtain such weapons.

He stressed that the Islamic Republic of Iran and Russia should expand their cooperation in order to stop the U.S. influence in the region. He said: By joining the republic of Azerbaijan's oil consortium America is seeking more than economic interests and is pursuing its own political goals.

Nateq-Nuri also referred to the Chechen issue and called for the resolution of the problem through peaceful negotiation.

He said: The path of cooperation is open for cooperation between Iran and Russia in all fields and added that the current level of cooperation between Iran and Russia in the economic field is inadequate. He also called for the expansion of the two countries' ties in economic, parliamentary, and political fields.

During the meeting the first deputy speaker of the Russian State Duma described his talks with Iran's officials as useful and constructive and called for the expansion of relations between Iran and Russia in all fields. He said Iran was a reliable neighbor for Russia and praised positions adopted by our country's officials concerning regional issues, in particular the Chechen issue.

Mr. Mikhail Mityukov described the Chechen issue as a tragedy and catastrophe for Russia and said: Apart from the Chechens, other Russian nations were also claiming independence. Unfortunately, Russian executive officials were able to resolve those problems by diplomatic means.

Welcomes Caspian Sea Conference

*LD0803150195 Tehran IRNA in English 1411 GMT
8 Mar 95*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 8, IRNA—The visiting deputy speaker of Russian Duma Mikhail Mityurov called for further improvement of regional cooperation in a meeting here on Wednesday [8 March] with Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Hashemi.

Mityurov said Moscow is against any foreign presence in the region, insisting that problems of the countries in the region should be solved by themselves.

Deputy speaker of Russian Duma welcomed Iran's proposal for holding a conference of the Caspian Sea littoral states parliaments.

Referring to the history of Tehran-Moscow relations, Hashemi said boosting cooperation between the two countries would be to the benefit of both sides. Intervention of foreign forces threatens security of the region, Hashemi said. He stressed that regional cooperation in all areas could fill the vacuum which might otherwise be filled by foreign forces.

The Iranian official said nowadays, conflicts cannot be solved by military action. The recent developments in Chechnya is tragic from humane point of view, he added. Hashemi expressed hope that the problem could be solved through peaceful means.

Mityurov, while admitting the need for a peaceful solution to the crisis in Chechnya, attributed the prolonged conflict to many problems which the republic is facing.

Radio on Future Yeltsin Visit

*LD0903124095 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic
of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1053 GMT
9 Mar 95*

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] The three-day visit of a Russian delegation, headed by [Mikhail Mityukov] the first deputy speaker of that country's State Duma, has opened a new chapter in relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Russia.

The Russian delegation arrived on Tuesday [7 March] and met and conferred with President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, Majles Speaker Nateq-Nuri, and the deputy speaker [Hasan Rowhani]. During the talks with the top-ranking Iranian officials, the delegation conveyed the Russian Government's desire to expand and strengthen bilateral ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Most experts believe that frequent contacts and the expansion of parliamentary relations between the two important countries of the region, that is Iran and Russia, is regarded as the foundation stone for expansion and strengthening of ties in all fields on the basis of

respect for mutual interests. This was the first visit of a Russian parliamentary delegation to Iran, and during the talks in Tehran important discussions were held on bilateral relations and regional and international issues. Reports indicate that the results of these discussions have been very useful too.

One of the most important subjects of discussion was about ways to strengthen the Organization for Cooperation Among the Caspian Sea Littoral States. Iran and Russia are very much interested in this subject. The Caspian Sea was introduced as the sea of peace and friendship among countries of the region. Any agreement in this field, thus, will make it possible for all countries of the region to identify each other's needs and to coordinate their peaceful efforts for resolving the regional problems and crises, free from infiltration and conspiracies of foreigners. In this respect the discussion on compiling regulations about the rights of each country in the Caspian Sea is highly significant. Both Iran and Russia as well as other littoral states of this sea have common interests in this field.

Another interesting issue discussed during the Russian parliamentary delegation's visit in Tehran was that the two countries stressed the need for peaceful cooperation between them on nuclear issues. This issue has recently angered the U.S. authorities and some of their allies. Despite the repeated announcements that Iran and Russia are pursuing peaceful goals in their nuclear cooperation, and despite the fact that the Islamic Republic of Iran keeps emphasizing that it is opposed to the manufacturing and proliferation of nuclear weapons, the U.S. authorities have adopted a negative propaganda stance against this fruitful cooperation between Iran and Russia. The U.S. authorities have tried to create obstacles in the path of cooperation between the two countries. Fortunately, the stances of the Russian delegation, reiterating determination to continue cooperation without submitting to the U.S. sensational propaganda, once again demonstrated the two countries' firm resolve to display a supreme example of bilateral cooperation along peaceful and constructive paths.

However, despite the open atmosphere which existed during the talks between the Russian parliamentary delegations and the Iranian authorities, our country's top-ranking officials including the president and the Majles speaker showed their particular sensitivity toward [treatment of] the defenseless Chechen Muslims and conveyed their concern about the fate of the region's Muslims to the Russian authorities. The high-ranking Russian delegation responded positively to this issue. It must be noted that continuation of Moscow's endeavor to resolve this crisis by peaceful means and to punish those who committed crimes against the innocent civilians in the region, will increase Russia's credibility among Islamic countries, more than ever before.

At any rate it is expected that the visit of the Russian parliamentary delegation to Tehran, during which the

future trip of the Russian president [Boris Yeltsin] to Tehran was also discussed, will open a new chapter in the relations between the two great neighboring states, particularly since the treaty of friendship between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Russia has further paved the grounds for economic, technical, scientific, cultural, and technological cooperation.

Deputy Minister Discusses Kyrgyzstan Visit

*LD0703151795 Tehran IRNA in English 0842 GMT
7 Mar 95*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Moscow, March 7, IRNA—Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmud Va'ez, currently in Kyrgyzstan, discussed Tehran-Bishkek relations and cooperation with Kyrgyz Prime Minister Abbas Dzhumagulov Monday [6 March].

The Kyrgyz premier expressed hope that opening of his country's embassy in Tehran would open a new chapter in bilateral relations and cooperation between the two countries in a near future.

Describing as "bright" prospects for Iran-Kyrgyzstan relations, Dzhumagulov said that Bishkek attached great importance to its cooperation with Tehran.

Exchange of delegations between Iran and Kyrgyzstan, establishment of Tehran-Bishkek joint economic commission and opening of Kyrgyzstan's embassy in Tehran, the preliminary measures of which have already been taken, would pave the way for further cooperation between the two countries, said the Kyrgyz prime minister.

Va'ez, in reply outlined Iran's policy on expansion of ties with the central Asian republics and said that Iran would welcome promotion of relations with regional states.

He said that Iran-Kyrgyzstan relations were on the threshold of a serious development.

Earlier in the day, Va'ez discussed matters of mutual interest with Kyrgyz foreign minister. The two agreed to follow up their talks in Tehran next April.

Greece's Papandreou Hails Joint Peace Initiative

*LD0803150895 Tehran IRNA in English 1434 GMT
8 Mar 95*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Athens, March 8, IRNA—Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou in a meeting with visiting Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati Wednesday [8 March] hailed a joint Greek-Iranian initiative for peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina (B-H) as a fruitful cooperation and a step in the right direction, Iranian diplomatic sources told the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA).

The 25-minute meeting between Papandreou and Velayati covered regional issues, particularly the situation in Bosnia and the Balkans, and bilateral relations.

The Greek premier hoped that today's crucial trilateral meeting between the foreign ministers of Greece, Iran and B-H would lead to a viable and just peace in the region.

Velayati conveyed an invitation by Iranian President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani to the Greek premier to visit Tehran.

An Iranian diplomatic source described Papandreou-Velayati talks as "crucial and fruitful."

A source close to Papandreou told IRNA that Greek-Iranian relations "are very good and expanding."

Meanwhile, Velayati and his Bosnian counterpart Irfan Ljubijankic conversed briefly before joining a lunch hosted in their honour by Greek Foreign Minister Karolos Papoulias.

The three ministers are to meet Wednesday evening to look for possibilities for a joint Greek-Iranian peace initiative in Bosnia.

Velayati, currently on a four-nation European tour, arrived in the Greek capital Tuesday night for a 2-day official visit following an invitation by Papoulias.

The Bosnian foreign minister arrived in Athens Wednesday morning. He held talks with his Greek counterpart on the latest situation in B-H.

Bosnian Religious Leader Visits, Praises Support

*LD0803205295 Tehran IRNA in English 2022 GMT
8 Mar 95*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March 8, IRNA—The Reis-ul-Ulema of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Mostafavic, who arrived here last night told Iranian Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Mostafa Mirsalim here today that the Islamic revolution had drastically changed the world.

He said the Bosnians were happy to have been contemporaries of Imam Khomeini and to be standing against their ethnic cleansing by the enemies of Muslims.

The Bosnian religious official said the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina had never been as united as they are today.

He appreciated Iran's support for the government and people of Bosnia and expressed hope that an agreement between Iran and his country would bring the two nations closer together.

Mirsalim expressed hope that the Muslim people of Bosnia-Herzegovina would maintain their march toward progress after their eventual victory in their current defensive war.

He said the Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to offer every help to the ulema of Bosnia.

Paper Reports on Conoco-NIOC Oil, Gas Deal*NC0903111395 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 6 Mar 95 p 4*

[FBIS Translated Text] The first buy-back agreement concerning the expansion of the oilfields stated in the Second Five-Year Plan was signed on Sunday [5 March] between the National Iranian Oil Company [NIOC] and Conoco Company, which is registered in Holland.

The Petroleum Ministry's Public Relations Office has reported that on the basis of this agreement, the contractor will make all the necessary investments for the development of the Sirri A and E fields, which are two of our country's major oilfields in the Persian Gulf. Reimbursement will be made by the oil produced by these resources during a period of five years and a maximum of eight years after the commencement of production, within the framework of the crude oil sales agreement at prices that will be calculated according to the market prices.

The gas produced by these fields as well as gas from the two other fields—Sirri C and D—which are currently being burned will also be collected with the help of investments by the contractor, and will be targeted for industrial use and injection via pipelines, which will be built by the contractors for the export of gas to Dubai on the basis of international prices.

Production by these fields is expected to total 120,000 barrels of oil as well as about 800 cubic feet of gas per day. The estimated income from the two fields is estimated at \$13.5 billion from oil and about \$750 million from gas sales. The timetable for the implementation of the project has been regulated so that oil production in the Sirri A field will begin 2.5 years after the signing of the agreement and production in the Sirri E field will begin one year after the signing and will ultimately reach 120,000 barrels per day.

Under this agreement, the contractor will make the maximum use of Iranian products and specialized services and should allocate at least 30 percent of the total estimated expenditures of the project to this area.

In addition, to transfer technology and to make the best use of the fields after they are handed over, a training program for Iranian personnel, to which 1 percent of the total amount of the agreement will be allocated, has also been envisaged.

Trade With Denmark Drops as Export Credits Fade*95LA0144A Copenhagen BERLINGSKE TIDENDE in Danish 8 Feb 95 p III 4*

[Article by Lise Tajik: "Iran Exports Halved"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Danish trade with Iran has dropped by more than half over the last three years, not because of political reasons, but because the conditions for obtaining export credits for Iran have been tightened.

A dramatic fall in Denmark's exports to Iran is traceable to neither moral scruples nor irritation in the Danish business community over the religious leadership's death sentence for author Salman Rushdie. The drop is connected exclusively to economic factors.

Iran over the past couple of years has become a poor payer of its obligations, not because it lacks money, but because the government apparently has elected to use its oil revenues for things other than feta cheese and machine tools, for example, from Denmark. Other countries are also complaining about incomplete or slow payments from Iran.

In 1991, Denmark and Iran signed an agreement in Copenhagen to increase cooperation in the areas of trade, finance, and technology. Iran at that time was on the way to becoming Denmark's most important export market in the Middle East. In addition to feta cheese, there was strong interest in Danish technology and equipment for modernizing agriculture, industry, and fishing. But the situation has now changed.

Denmark's exports to Iran have contracted sharply since 1991, when it peaked at 1.237 billion kroner. In the first 11 months of 1994, this amounted to only 538,556 kroner—or a decline of more than half from 1991. Imports from Iran during the same period have fallen only modestly, according to the Danish Government Office of Statistics, specifically from 69.173 million kroner in 1991, to 59,538 million kroner in the first 11 months of 1994.

In the fall of 1994, Iran had accumulated a debt to Denmark of 841 million kroner in unpaid export guarantees that had come due. Following difficult negotiations—outside the Paris Club by Western creditors—Denmark succeeded in signing a debt agreement on favorable terms with the Iranians, which they have since observed.

The reason debt negotiations with Iran are often entered into by individual countries is that the Americans still have difficulty in sitting down at the table with the Iranians. In the meantime, the Export Promotion Board has tightened the conditions for extending export guarantees to Iran—so much so that exports have almost come to a halt. The demand today is for a so-called "avista" reimbursement, which means that the loan provider must be paid upon delivery of the document.

"We demand money upon delivery, while they would prefer to have credit," says Lars Kolte, Deputy Director of the Export Promotion Board.

Human Rights Said Related to 'U.S. Interests'*LD0803205495 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 8 Mar 95*

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [The] Iranian permanent representative at the international organizations in Geneva, Mr. Sirus Naseri, on Tuesday March 7, in a speech at the European Union, talked about the human rights violation in Islamic states, describing them as baseless. Speaking at the session of the UN Human Rights Commission, Mr. Naseri referred to the hostile attitude of the West vis-a-vis Islam, saying that the EU states regard the 21 Islamic countries as violators of human rights. UN, as the largest world body, is the only authority to consider international issues, including those of human rights. The facts, however, indicate that considering the issue of human rights has been treated differently, meaning that international bodies have been misused for dogmatic political interests under the pretext of defending human rights. Human rights have been degraded to the extent that universal ideals have changed too to preserve foreign policies of some states. A look at the UN performance towards world issues, especially the record of Human Rights Committee, unfortunately reveals that the methods employed have been based on unrealistic principles.

The West's claim over the violation of human rights in the Islamic states has been carried out at a time when Western states, including U.S., have turned a closed eye to the real cases of violation of human rights. The crimes committed by the Zionist regime, on daily basis in Palestine, the savage aggression of the Serbs in Bosnia, massacring Muslims, are a few cases of human rights violations paid no attention to by the Western states.

This inattention is rooted in the West's interpretation of human rights which is far from truth. From the point of view of Washington the term human right is closely related to U.S. interests. These rights are violated in places where U.S. and other Western states' interests are in danger. If the most savage events are happening and the U.S. interests are safe then there is no human rights violation. That is why the Serbs' heinous crimes and their ethnic cleansing in the heart of the so-called civilized Europe is not considered a human rights violation by the White House.

Official: UN Distorts Image in Rights Reports

LD0803225695 Tehran IRNA in English 2154 GMT
8 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] United Nations, Geneva, March 9, (IRNA)—Director of the Iranian department of human rights Hoseyb Sheikh Zeynuddin said here Tuesday [7 March] that the allegations made by the special representative of the United Nations Human Rights Committee, Reynaldo Galindo Pohl, presented a distorted picture of Islamic Iran.

In his letter to the chairman, Zeynuddin said: "on the issue of the murder of three Christian pastors which deeply shocked the public opinion of Iran intensive and extensive investigations were launched by the judicial authorities to bring the culprits to face the court of law...

The final stages of preparation for the court hearing are under way and opening of their public trial is expected to be on 15 March, 1995."

The terrorist grouplet 'Mojahedin-e Khalq outfit' (MKO) abducted and killed three Christian pastors last year in an aborted effort to tarnish the image of the Islamic Republic. Later the same ring was found involved in the shocking bomb blast at the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS) in Mashhad on the day of Ashura, and the aborted attempts to bomb the shrine of Hazrat Masouma (AS) in holy Qom, the mausoleum of Imam Khomeyni in Tehran and a Friday prayer gathering of Sunni Muslims in Zahedan.

The Iranian official refuting the allegations of Galindo Pohl continued that "the major part of the executions are related to drug-dealers and traffickers as Iran continues its campaign against the drug mafia...

"Such a biased conclusion is never substantiated throughout his report. Therefore one cannot but reason that Mr Galindo Pohl is once again falling into a trap to his own discredit.

"Ironically, few years ago, Iran was criticized for high numbers of execution of drug traffickers. Now that the new policies adopted by government officials and massive investments made to contain the spread of deadly drugs resulted in noticeable decrease on such figures, the special representative resorts to such an unfounded and unsubstantiated allegation about press censing to public the true numbers of executions. This is the justification put forward for [word indistinct] 2 and 3 of the Resolution I. 90 referring to it as 'widespread use of death penalty.'...

"With regard to the death of Mr Saidi Sirjani (p. 20) Mr Galindo Pohl has requested an autopsy to be done. An autopsy was indeed conducted... The result of pathology and negative result of toxicology indicates that the cause of death was blood vessels disease and [word indistinct] complications..."

Zeynuddin in his letter referred to Pohl's alleged 'widespread discrimination of women', and pointed out that the situation of women in Iran is far from being discriminatory let alone being widespread.

He said: "I should remind Mr. Galindo Pohl, who was not present in the General Assembly and could not be here in Geneva to give us an opportunity to discuss these issues with him and was not available for us to see him in his country of (?residence) when we volunteered to bear the expenses for a trip to Latin America..."

Zeynuddin said if Pohl considers Hejab a discrimination against Muslim women and the (?nudity) in the West to be the liberation of women "we are proud of such discrimination."

He said the divine laws of the holy Qur'an are the basis of the constitution of Iran and "devoted Muslim nations

like ours are not and will not change their course of life to comply with a set of (?values imposed by) [words indistinct]"

He then defended Iran's stance against sentenced Apostate Salman Rushdie, whose intentional injury to the sentiments of the world's 1.2 billion [passage indistinct].

He said: "Now turning to the case of Salman Rushdie in op 4, we believe that the minimum level of common understanding (between two parties) from international instruments on human rights about freedom of expression should be that such freedom cannot be permitted to insult or incite the very sacred and respected values of any nation let alone the world Muslims... Governments are responsible for respecting values dear to their people as much as to their international commitment if not more..."

Next the Iranian envoy took up the case of religious minorities who enjoy all the rights in Islamic Iran including freedom of worship and have their own elected representatives to the Majles (Parliament).

"Minorities as citizens of Iran not only enjoy the support of the constitution and law of land but the government is obliged to provide opportunities for exercising their right to educate their children in their own school, teach them their own language, traditions and etc. Religious minorities such as Zoroastrians, Jews and Christians have even their own deputies to parliament," he pointed out.

Zeyneddin, incidentally took note that Muslims minorities in Western democracies in Europe despite having a percentage much larger than the religious minorities in Iran enjoy no such rights.

He, however, made it clear: "On the subject of minorities, I would like to be clear on the fact that my government does not consider political or foreign affiliated cults to be minorities and thus finds it irrelevant to engage itself in responding to such inquiries concerning their rights. But as citizen of Iran any and all stand equal in the eyes of the law and if laws are not respected, they will be subject to the relevant provision of the law regardless of their affiliation."

Zeyneddin said: "[Word indistinct], however, recognize the sensitivity of this issue, but remain with dismay over the fact that almost all special rapporteurs and specifically Mr Galindo Pohl continue to be selective even on the cases of violation of human rights in my country."

The letter dismissed "the traditional group of sponsors" of resolution 1.90 who "continue to claim a set of traditional allegations" every year at the U.N.

"We find no seriousness in the substance of the many issues raised due to the lack of circumstantial evidences or knowledge on the part of the special representative.

"We find the sponsors of the resolution 1.90 to be pursuing a political motive and intimidation, thus we attach no real value to their selective efforts in scrutinizing Iran."

In conclusion the Iranian human rights envoy's letter said a full fledged cooperation is welcome only if respect and recognition of cultural and sacred values of the people is shown.

Majles Rules on Radioactive Material Purchases

LD0803120795 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] At this morning's Majles open session, chaired by Mr. Nateq-Nuri, debate continued on clauses of the budget bill for 1374 [year beginning 21 March 1995]. Some amendments proposed by deputies on seven other clauses were ratified.

In accordance with the clauses debated today, the purchase of technical knowhow from abroad by the executive machinery—which uses current and development allocations relating to research—for the implementation of relevant projects is permissible provided, based on the findings of the State Scientific Research Council, the required technical knowhow does not exist inside the country.

All the executive machinery—and that which deals with ionizing and non-ionizing radiation—must, before any foreign purchase is made relating to radioactive materials, obtain a permit, based on the lack of domestic production and the lack of domestic knowhow. [passage omitted]

Council Approves Loans for Urban Development

LD0403213395 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2030 GMT 4 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In order to guide executive operations and speed up the preparation and utilization of land, the Economic Council has approved the allocation of 30 billion rials of loans for increasing the urban development activities. The Economic Council has allocated this fund for speeding up the building of Hashtgerd, Parand, Pardis, Andisheh, Sadra, Sahand, and Baharestan townships.

Rafsanjani Cites Women's 'Progress' in Address

LD0803151895 Tehran IRNA in English 1459 GMT 8 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, March, 8, IRNA—President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani termed women's progress in science as one of the factors behind the progress of Iran's Islamic society. Rafsanjani who was speaking in a ceremony in al-Zahra University said the rise in the number of educated women nullifies enemies' claims and propaganda about restriction of women's activities in Iran.

At present more than 30 percent of university students are women, President Rafsanjani added. The increase in

number of educated women speaks of Islam's special attention to women's education, he said.

The president said the necessity of women's presence in different scenes of society is an accepted principal and the difference between Iran and western countries is about the ways of their presence in the society and moral issues. The experience has shown that women's presence in Iranian society while observing Islamic moral codes has been more successful than in western societies, Rafsanjani said.

Underlining the necessity of women's efforts in education and research, the president called on Iranian women to do their best in areas of art, innovation, creativity and cultural affairs.

President Rafsanjani praised women's success and achievements in scientific, cultural, health and management areas after the victory of 1979 Islamic revolution.

In the ceremony [the] minister of culture and higher education and a group of cultural officials were present. Dean of al-Zahra University, Kouhian said 80 percent of the university's lecturers are women.

External Malay Broadcasts Begin in Southeast Asia

LD0403205495 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 4 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In order to air the voice of the Islamic revolution to Muslims residing in Southeast Asia, the Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran has started broadcasting in the Malay language. This program is broadcast daily from 1700-1730 Tehran local time—that is 1330-1400 hours GMT mean time, through short wave 19 meter band, 15,365 MHz frequency, as well as 25 meter band, 11,875 MHz.

This program includes political, social, cultural, and economic issues, as well as subjects on the global movement of Islam and the achievements of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the Malay-speaking Muslims in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, Thailand, and Singapore.

Pakistan

Reportage on Attack Against U.S. Diplomats

Police Detail Attack

BK0903045395 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 9 Mar 95 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karachi: Two employees of U.S. Consulate General in Karachi were gunned down and another wounded when assailants riding a yellow cab sprayed staff van of the Consulate with bullets near Nursery at Sharea Faisal on Wednesday [8 March] morning.

Assailants used a snatched yellow cab in the offence which was later found abandoned in Mohammad Ali Society.

The dead were identified as Gary C. Durell, a communications technician, Jackie Van Landingham, Consulate Secretary, while the injured was the latter's husband Mark McCloy, a mailroom staffer. The van driver, a Pakistani, who remained unhurt rushed the vehicle to Aga Khan Medical University Hospital.

This was the first time when staffers of a foreign mission fell victims to the ongoing violence in the city while the incident was third in which foreigners were killed. Earlier three Thai students were shot dead in North Karachi while a Swiss national was gunned down in Gulshan-e-Iqbal.

As per routine, the staff van-Toyota Hiace (CC-64-126) was on its way to the American Consulate after taking the staff from their residences in KDA Scheme-1.

It was about 7:35 am when it stopped at the traffic signal, the point from where turning is available to go to Chanaser Halt Station, the yellow cab following it came ahead from left side and blocked the path of the van. Gunmen got out of the vehicles and sprayed the van with bullets from front, back and left side in a lightning operation. Accomplishing their task, the gunmen got into the yellow cab which took a U turn towards Airport and disappeared.

The attack resulted in multiple injuries to Gary C. Durell and Jackie Van Landingham, Mark McCloy received a bullet in his leg while the van driver remained unhurt. Keeping himself in senses the driver also took a U turn and accelerated the van to reach to Aga Khan Medical University Hospital. By that time Durell was dead but Jackie was breathing. However, she died before reaching the hospital as doctors pronounced the two victims dead when statures were brought in the emergency department.

At the time of the incident, Durell was sitting at the seat behind the driver while the consulate secretary and her husband McCloy at the rear seats.

The incidents was witnessed either by the people waiting at the bus stops or by the labourers taking breakfast at an under construction plaza on the up track as all the shops at both sides of the road were closed at that time.

Sharif, one of the construction workers, told The News that he was bringing tea for the watchman sitting at a charpoy on the frontside of the fourth floor. "I heard shots thus took shelter of a wall from where I saw a yellow cab taking a wild turn towards Airport."

The watchman who had witnessed the entire scene was taken away by the police for questioning along with three others. The three men taken away by the Feruzabad police were Akram, Shah and Abdul Qayum. Riaz,

owner of the building was shuttling between his site and the police station to get his men released.

The Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), East, Wajid Durrani said: "The labourers have not been detained and they would be at liberty after questioning."

"Except from impounding the yellow cab Tipu Sultan Police found abandoned in Mohammad Ali Society, we could not make any headway in this case so far," a worried and tired Durrani said. The SSP said: "We believed that the same yellow cab was used in the operation as it was snatched at 6:50 am by two motorcyclists near Hotel Midway House and found abandoned at 9:30 by the police."

Apart from taking finger prints traces, the police found some other evidence which may lead us to nab the culprits, he added.

Earlier, the police were intercepting Suzuki Khyber cabs all over the city. Citizens rang to The News office complaining that the police had taken a number of cabs into their custody.

Police Fault Colleagues on Response

BK0903051395 Islamabad THE NEWS in English
9 Mar 95 p 1,5

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karachi: A few seconds after the van carrying American consular staff was ambushed by masked gunmen at a traffic signal on Karachi's busiest street on Wednesday [8 March] morning, Traffic Constable Tanvir Ahmad spotted a police car fitted with a machine gun on its roof top approaching the main street from the adjacent lane.

Tanvir rushed to the armed police posse and pointed out the yellow cab, in which the terrorists were escaping, to the officer in-charge. "Stupid shall we get killed by chasing these people?" shouted Sub-Inspector Mohammad Ghous of Karachi's Ferozabad Police Station. The police party then saw the van driver, carrying the dead and wounded Americans, speeding towards the hospital, yet it did not occur to them to flash a message on their wireless. Instead they drove for six minutes to get to the Ferozabad Police Station to narrate the details of the terrorist strike they had just witnessed to a senior official.

Traffic cop Tanvir Ahmad himself told this story to Afzal Shigri, the chief of police in Sindh province when he visited the spot of the terrorist attack on Wednesday morning. "The policemen were so unconcerned that they did not even bother to look in the direction of the getaway car," Tanvir, the main eyewitness of the Wednesday's shooting told The News. "With a little courage they could have got to the terrorists and fired upon them from the rear," Tanvir said. Until late on Wednesday evening the Karachi police bosses had not initiated any action against the policemen who let the dreaded terrorists escape in front of their eyes.

Surprisingly, for the Karachi police bosses Wednesday's event and the police reaction on the spot did not represent an extraordinary event. Late last month when three gunmen were spraying bullets at worshipers in a Karachi mosque, a police van was standing at a close distance yet it did not move. On February 5, unidentified gunmen had ambushed a fund-raising camp of Kashmiris only a few yards from a major Karachi police station. Thirty people died and another 50 were wounded in those two incidents.

Officially 20,000 policemen, all armed with sophisticated automatic weapons, are deployed all over Karachi. The reason for such a large deployment was, "To challenge the terrorist on the spot," a senior police official said. Besides these policemen, the Benazir Bhutto administration has also sent an additional force of 15,000 para-military troops in to meet the challenge from the terrorists, according to a senior official.

To collect intelligence on terrorists network in Karachi, a senior intelligence official acknowledged that seven Pakistani intelligence agencies have the services of at least 6500 intelligence operatives, yet this massive force of police and intelligence officials has yet to bust even a single terrorist outfit in Karachi.

It may be because of this level of incompetence on the part of Pakistan's law enforcing and intelligence services that the US State Department decided on Wednesday to despatch a team of seasoned investigators from the Federal Bureau of Investigation to probe this latest shooting incident in Karachi.

To find the real culprits from this long list of suspects, a team of investigators from the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is reaching Karachi on Thursday. This was confirmed by the U.S. and Pakistani officials. "We have been told that from Friday the FBI agents would lead and direct this important investigation," a senior Karachi police official told The News.

The FBI has the experience of investigating anti-US terrorism in Pakistan. The agency had thoroughly investigated the torching of the U.S. embassy in Islamabad in 1979. In 1985 they led the probe into the case of Pan Am hijacking in Karachi that had left 21 people dead. The FBI also came to Karachi 1993 to locate Aimal Kansi who had killed two CIA officials in the random shooting outside the CIA headquarters in February of 1993. The FBI agents had also carried out a secret probe in Karachi about Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf and Sheikh Omar's connections in Pakistan.

"Unfortunately most of the major cases of terrorism in the world in the past couple of years had a direct or indirect Pakistani connection," said a senior official who thought that it was wise on the part of Pakistani authorities to allow the FBI to conduct a probe into this latest case of terrorism.

Wednesday's terrorist shooting further exposed the incompetence of the sprawling network of the security

agencies and the police in Karachi. "Of course we knew that an attack was expected against the United States interest in Karachi, yet we failed to prevent it," conceded a senior Karachi police official while speaking to his officers on Wednesday morning.

Late on Wednesday evening the Karachi police and various intelligence agencies operating in the city placed the activists from a religious sect on top of their list of suspects in the shooting. Although no concrete evidence was forthcoming they drew a parallel between the murders in Lahore on Tuesday and the attack against the Americans in Karachi.

Sipah-e-Mohammad and other leading Shia organisations in Pakistan have been accusing the United States of fanning sectarian violence in the country that has left more than 500 people dead last year. "It is because of their affiliation with Iran that these organisations hold the U.S. responsible for everything bad in the world," said a senior intelligence official in Karachi.

At the burial of TJ [Tehrike Jafaria] activists, attended by thousands of people, in Lahore on Wednesday the crowd raised anti-US slogans and raised slogans seeking revenge. "This is not the battle between the Shias and Sunnis. The US wants us to fight. Let us stand up against the Great Satan," said Allama Sajid Naqvi the Chief of Tehrike Jafaria Pakistan (TJP).

Diplomats in Karachi thought that the Shia extremists may be behind Wednesday's attack, but these diplomats and some secret service agents felt that the investigators must also concentrate on unveiling Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf's network in the country. "Each time he carried out a major terrorist operation anywhere in the world Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf returned back to Karachi which apparently served as a safe haven for this most dangerous terrorist of the world," said a Western diplomat.

Senior police officials in Karachi acknowledged that they had no information whatsoever of Ramzi's network in the country. "We are totally blank on this subject," said a senior official at Karachi police's Crime Investigation Agency. After his arrest from Islamabad last month, there was wide spread apprehension in the U.S. diplomatic missions in Pakistan that Ramzi's organisation in the country might carry out a retaliatory strike.

Although the religious extremists emerged as the chief suspects after 12 hours of investigation in Karachi, many police officials were asked earlier in the day to question the activists in the dissidents of Muhajir Qaumi Movement (MQM). The MQM "Haqiqi" [MQM faction] was carrying out propaganda that the United States, with the help of the mainstream MQM, was trying to create a separate state for the Urdu speaking Mohajir community in Karachi.

Senior Haqiqi officials in Karachi on Wednesday denied having any hand or knowledge about Wednesday's terrorist shooting.

Some security officials were also trying to find a connection between militant Sunni organisations and the killings. Several orthodox Sunni organisations had reacted violently to the judgement last month by Lahore High Court acquitting two Christians of blasphemy charges. Sunni extremists, who took to the streets following the High Court judgements, had vowed to take revenge from the Western countries who were offering refuge to the two Christians.

Several militant Sunni organisations, committed to Jihad all over the world, had participated in the anti-West demonstrations in Lahore and there was large scale fear in Lahore police that militants might soon target Western diplomatic missions in Pakistan. Soon after the acquittal a wire service had wrongly reported that the acquitted Christians have been provided refuge in the United States.

While making arrangements to fly out the bodies of communication officer Gary C. Durell and Jackie Van Landingham, Secretary in the Political Section of the Consulate from Karachi to Washington, senior U.S. diplomats in Karachi were somewhat relieved that the loss of lives remained restricted to two persons. On normal days the shuttle that came under attack would carry at least nine U.S. officials from their neighbourhood in Karachi KDA-I to the U.S. Consulate General.

"Only because of spring holidays at Karachi's American School several families had gone on vacations. That was the reason the shuttle was carrying three passengers only," an official disclosed.

On Wednesday afternoon Karachi police recovered the Suzuki yellow cab number PG 1326 that had been snatched by three gunmen from Karachi's international Airport about 50 minutes prior to the shooting. The yellow cab was abandoned at about 5 minutes drive from the spot. Eye witnesses said that a red colour Toyota car accompanied the assassins riding the yellow cab. Ballistic experts with Karachi police said that two AK-47 assault rifles had been used in the incident. "The terrorists were real experts as their shooting did not smash the wind screen. In fact they crafted three different holes in the Ford van. Their hands did not shake as their rifles emitted fire," a Karachi police investigator said.

Intelligence Reports Submitted

BK0903070695 Karachi NAWA-I-WAQT in Urdu
9 Mar 95 pp 8,7

[Report by Aziz Alawi]

[FBIS Translated Text] Islamabad—Intelligence agencies have submitted their reports to President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, and Interior Minister Major General Retired Nasirullah Babar on the slaying of the American employees in Karachi. The reports of these agencies have identified possible motives for this dastardly murder of the diplomats. Informed sources citing the reports say that one of

the motives for the murder of the American diplomats may have been to internationalize the current violent atmosphere now prevailing in Karachi. A second reason may have been that antinational forces or foreign enemy forces want to sabotage the scheduled visit of Hillary Clinton, President Clinton's wife, to Pakistan. A third reason may have been to jeopardize the 4 April visit to the United States of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. Yet another reason may have been to prevent American investment projects in Karachi, and the assailants may well have meant to give a powerful message to stop this American investment. Another possible motive for the murder is stated to be the reaction against the government's decision to hand over Ramzi Yusuf to the United States. Or it might have been the reaction of some religious group against the U.S. Government's attitude after the sentences awarded to the two Christians involved in the blasphemy case, a reaction which is antinational. Citing the reports, the sources also say that at present both the United States and Pakistan should desist from showing any immediate, bilateral reaction against this act of terrorism. It is very possible that a group somewhere might secretly claim responsibility for the incident.

Victims Said Not Listed With Ministry

BK0903070895 Lahore JANG in Urdu 9 Mar 95 p 8

[FBIS Translated Text] Karachi—It has been learned from informed sources that records for two staff members of the American consulate, Jackie Van Landingham and Gary Durell, who were shot to death by unidentified terrorists on 8 March, are not available at the Karachi office of the Foreign Ministry.

According to the sources, there are about 26 diplomats at the American consulate general in Karachi. Records of other staff members are not available locally from the Foreign Ministry.

Officials, Politicians Respond to Killings

Bhutto Message to Clinton

BK0903045995 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 9 Mar 95 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad—Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has condemned the heinous crime of killing of two staff members of US Consulate and expressed deep regrets at the tragic incident. She said this in a letter to US President Bill Clinton.

Following is the text of the message:

Dear Mr President: I do not have words to convey my deepest regrets at the tragic incident in Karachi, today, which has resulted in the loss of two American lives. We condemn this heinous crime against innocent people which is part of a well planned campaign of terrorism to create fear and harassment. I have put my senior most investigators on the job to carry-out a full investigation.

You may rest assured that every effort will be made to apprehend the perpetrators of this act of terrorism. This has reinforced our determination to work with you and others in the international community to combat and eliminate all forms of terrorism. May I, through you, Mr President, convey on behalf of my government and on my own behalf, our profound condolences to the members of the bereaved families.

Spokesman Sees No Impact on U.S. Ties

BK0903103295 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1000 GMT 9 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A Foreign Office spokesman has said that the tragic shooting incident in Karachi yesterday will not have any adverse impact on U.S.-Pakistan relations. Answering newsmen's questions at the weekly briefing, the spokesman said the United States has commended Pakistan's efforts and cooperation in investigating the incident. He added that the incident will not affect Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's visit to the United States or Mrs. Hillary Clinton's visit to Pakistan.

Answering a question, the spokesman said it is clear that certain quarters are interested in destabilizing Karachi and Pakistan and in harming the existing good friendly relations between Pakistan and the United States, particularly at this critical juncture when the top most personalities of the two countries are about to visit each other's country.

The spokesman said Pakistan has agreed with the U.S. proposal to send a FBI team which will arrive Pakistan soon to assist in investigations.

Sindh Minister Implicates Indian Unit

BK0903084295 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 9 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Sindh chief minister, Syed Abdullah Shah, has said that foreign agents, particularly the agents of RAW [India's Research and Analyses Wing], must be involved in yesterday's incident of firing on the van of the U.S. Consulate General in Karachi. Talking to newsmen in Karachi today, he said these elements want to damage relations between Pakistan and the United States.

He said the drug mafia against which the government has taken various steps may also be involved in the incident.

Replying to a question, the chief minister said that three teams are investigating the matter and some progress in the investigation has been made.

Asif: 'Enemy Country' Responsible

BK0903045795 Islamabad THE NATION in English 9 Mar 95 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Singapore—Pakistan Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali has strongly condemned

the killings of American Consulate staff in Karachi and stated that the Prime Minister had personally instituted an inquiry into the tragic incident.

"We suspect that this is an act of the enemy country which cannot bear friendly relations between Pakistan and the United States," the Foreign Minister told journalists here.

He said the gory incident seemed to be timed in such a way that it jeopardises PM's visit to the U.S. State Minister for Finance Makhdom Shahabuddin said the incident would not lead to any change in Prime Minister's plans of visiting the U.S. in mid-April.

Interior Minister: 'Foreign Hand' Possible

BK0903051295 Islamabad THE NEWS in English
9 Mar 95 pp 1,12

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad: Interior Minister Nasirullah Khan Babar said Wednesday [8 March] that terrorists wanted to destabilise Karachi and malign the government by killing the two Americans in the Sindh metropolis.

"The killings may have been sponsored by a foreign hand or an ethnic or a sectarian group," he told the reporters at his Parliament chambers. "Terrorists may have wanted to sabotage Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's forthcoming visit to the U.S."

Babar said the car which was used by the terrorists had been recovered. It was snatched by them 45 minutes before they attacked the Americans' van. He said there were three other witnesses of the attack. The Interior Minister said the Sindh government had been directed to coordinate with the Consulate office for providing security to its diplomats and staff if they want. "I have talked to them (Americans) and they understand our position on the killings," Babar said. He denied that the diplomatic community based in Karachi had conveyed its concern to the government or different countries were planning to reduce or withdraw their staff from the Sindh metropolis after killings.

Babar ruled out that the extradition of Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf was a factor in the Americans' killing. He said the govt would continue its crackdown against sectarian elements who were planning hatred and violence. "The govt had substantial evidence against those it has already arrested."

Roundup of Condemnations

BK0903092995 Karachi DAWN in English 9 Mar 95
pp 3, 5

[Report by "Our Staff Reporter": "Murders widely condemned"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karachi, March 8—Political leaders and representatives of a cross-section of society

have condemned the murder of two American diplomats in the city on Wednesday morning in an ambush attack by terrorists.

They said: "No doubt every government is duty-bound to protect the life and property of not only diplomats but all foreigners as well as those of its own citizens."

"Being members of an Islamic polity it is also the religious and national duty of each one of us to protect them," they emphasised.

Talking to DAWN Maulana Shah Ahmad Noorani, the chief of Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Pakistan [JUP], said: "When even the country is not secure from the terrorists, how one can expect that foreigners will be secured," he pointed out and said it appeared that now terrorists had become bold enough so much so that they were now targeting diplomats.

The JUP chief also referred to the increasing US interest and "laying of the trap" and said this incident called for a review of the two countries policy towards each other. As, he said, there is enough hatred against the US administration because of its policies vis-a-vis Pakistan's nuclear programme, the Kashmir issue and its increasing interest in Gwadar.

He warned that if the US administration failed to review its policies, which were creating an impression of taking undue advantage from the economic compulsions to make Pakistan its colony, there could be same reaction as it had to face in Somalia.

Maulana Noorani also asked the Pakistan government to review its decision of having joint military exercise with the US.

MNA [Member of National Assembly] Begum Nusrat Bhutto termed the attack on US diplomats a complete failure of the government and its administrative machinery. She visited Aga Khan Hospital and sympathised with the injured US consulate staff, Mark McCloy.

Pakistan Peoples Party [PPP], Sindh, President Syed Qaim Ali Shah, Secretary-General Rashid Rabbani and Information Secretary Habibuddin Junedi also expressed sympathies with bereaved families and hoped the government would soon be able to apprehend the culprits.

Mairaj Mohammed Khan, chairman of Pakistan Qaumi Mahaz-i-Azadi, has offered condolence to the US ambassador, the consul-general and the consulate staff in Karachi. He said: "Every government is duty-bound to provide protection to all diplomatic staff, including those of enemy countries."

He wondered whether the interior minister and the chief minister would have the moral courage and enough shame to resign in view of their inability to protect even the lives of diplomats, let alone ordinary citizens.

Jamaat-i-Islami, Karachi, chief Naimatullah Khan demanded full protection for diplomats and urged the government to arrest the culprits involved in the murder of the American diplomats and give them exemplary punishment.

He said the situation in Karachi had worsened so much that even foreign diplomats were no more secure while Interior Minister Nasirullah Babar and PPP ministers were harping the tune: "everything is under control and terrorism will not be allowed."

National People's Party Central Information Secretary Zia Abbas said: "The activities of RAW [Indian Research and Analysis Wing] in Sindh, especially in Karachi, have been continuing for the last many months." He criticised the authorities for not checking them. He asserted that the killing of US diplomats appeared to be a part of the conspiracy aimed at harming Pakistan-US good ties.

Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce & Industry [OICCI], President, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Karachi (KCCI), Ahmed A. Sattar, and the Chairman and members of the executive committee of SITE [expansion unknown] Association of Industry condemned the act of terrorism and urged the government to take appropriate action to apprehend the culprits and award them exemplary punishment. The OICCI observed that it was necessary to protect the investment environment in Pakistan.

Civil Liberties Union of Pakistan, Sindh Minister for Excise Mr Munawwar Ali Talpur, Advisor to Sindh Chief Minister Jam Saqi, the provincial leaders of Pakistan Peoples Party, President, Mazdoor Kissan Party Fatehyab Ali Khan, Jamshed Ahmad Khan of Pakistan Muslim League, Nazeer Tanoli of Tehrik-i-Istiqal, Karachi, Mohammad Aslam Khokhar of Bilal Welfare Movement also condemned the murder of US diplomats.

JI Leader: Diplomats 'No Longer Safe'

BK0903064595 Islamabad THE NEWS in English
9 Mar 95 p 5

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Amir Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) Senator Qazi Hussain Ahmad Wednesday [8 March] stressed for a comprehensive planning for an interim set up without "any imported person."

At a news conference in Cafeteria, the JI chief said any planningless change aimed at ousting the present government could cause troubles.

He failed to understand why former caretaker Prime Minister. Moin Qureshi was being received warmly in Pakistan.

He said indications suggested that Pakistan was under influence of foreigners. To substantiate, he said, Ramzi

Yusuf was handed over to the Americans and mysterious talks were held in Gwa [name as published] showing what was happening.

Qazi said the incidents in Karachi had proved that the government had miserably failed and it was evident from the killing of US diplomats in Karachi that even diplomats were no longer safe in Pakistan.

Replying to a question, the JI Chief urged upon the government to take practical steps to improve the Karachi situation though he said it had reached a situation where the government should be removed for having failed to protect lives of the citizen.

He said the JI was supporting the opposition in parliament but it would side with any political party that would make moves against the government for its overthrow.

He said the JI was observing March 10 as the Protest Day against the government.

Asked if he would like to see the army chief, the JI leader said if the army chief wished so, he would not mind. But he recalled that the COAS [chief of Army staff] had said he did not wish to see political leaders and the JI respected his wish.

Prof Khurshid, Naib Amir Ji said, however, it would be better if the army remained away from politics. Commenting on a statement of Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ali, Prof. Khurshid said he (the Foreign Minister) had said Pakistan was prepared for fissile material cut-off and said signing on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty was more dangerous than signing the NPT.

He criticised the government for its nuclear policy and said it was moving towards abandoning the nuclear programme adding the whole nation should resist this.

Politicians Respond With Sorrow, Anger

BK0903111295

[FBIS Editorial Report] The 9 March editions of the English-language Pakistani press contain reaction to the 8 March deaths in Karachi of two U.S. Consulate personnel through indirect quotations from a number of national and regional political leaders.

Nawaz Sharif, president of the Pakistani Muslim League-Nawaz and leader of the opposition, said in remarks cited on page 12 of THE MUSLIM that the incident was further evidence that the structure of law and order has collapsed in Karachi and that he deeply regretted this unfortunate loss of life. He also said that on several occasions he had offered his unconditional cooperation with the government on Karachi peace initiatives.

Syed Amir Ali Shai Kazmi chaired an emergency meeting on 8 March in Peshawar of Tehrik Farogh-i-Amm, according to a page 5 report in THE NEWS. The

group condemned the killings and called them a conspiracy by the Indian Government to damage the relationship between Pakistan and the United States. Mohammad Sarwar Khan Sarhadi, chairman of the All Pakistan People's Labour Federation, also attended the meeting and expressed his anguish about the killings.

Remarks by Ajmal Dehlvi, negotiator in the continuing dialogue between the government and the Muhajir Qaumi Movement (MQM), were published on page 14 of THE NATION. Dehlvi said the incident was a turning point in the history of Pakistan and predicted changes in the Sindh Government administration.

Comments by several senators were reported on page 12 of THE NEWS. Khurshid Ahmad of Jamaat-i-Islami said he deplored the minimal effect the continuing Karachi violence seemed to have on Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, and mentioned Bhutto's schedule of activities abroad. Kamal Azfar of the Pakistan People's Party denied that the government lacked concern about the Karachi situation, and said that terrorists there were determined to weaken the country through sectarian differences.

Japanese Envoy: Investment 'Seriously' Affected
BK0903031795 Hong Kong AFP in English 0233 GMT 9 Mar 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karachi, March 9 (AFP)—The assassination of two US consular employees marked an alarming turn in Karachi's deteriorating law-and-order situation and has hurt Pakistan's efforts to woo foreign investment, diplomats and businessmen said.

Prospects for economic investment could be "seriously" affected by Wednesday's [8 March] ambush, Japanese Ambassador Takao Kawakami said here.

The attack—the first on foreign diplomatic staff in Pakistan's commercial capital and largest city—sent shock waves through the business and diplomatic communities.

Unidentified assailants using automatic weapons opened fire on a van carrying the Americans to work. Jacqueline Vanlandingham, a secretary at the US consulate in Karachi, and Gary Durrell, a communications technician, were killed.

A consulate employee's spouse, Mark McCloy, was wounded but in stable condition at a hospital.

About 1,000 people have been killed in Karachi over the past 14 months, in a spiral of violence linked to ethnic, political and sectarian problems.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto quickly condemned the slaying of the two Americans as part of a "well-planned campaign" of terrorism, and the Karachi Stock Exchange plunged by 29 points.

President Bill Clinton ordered US authorities Wednesday to help track down and arrest the gunmen, saying Americans were outraged by the violence.

Kawakami, who was in the city Wednesday, told AFP that if the situation continued to worsen, Japanese investors would not come to Pakistan despite its "good" economic environment.

He said law and order was the focus of his talks with the authorities in Sindh province, of which Karachi is the capital, on Tuesday, adding that Islamabad had assured Japan it was taking the issue "very seriously."

The Italian consul general in Karachi, Marco Tornetta, said the attack on the Americans was a "horrible" incident aimed at destabilising the country and its economy and added that he was "shocked" by it.

Nisar A. Memon, head of the Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry, strongly condemned the incident.

"The perpetrators must be arrested," said the US company executive. "This is imperative to protect the investment environment."

Ahmad Abdul Sattar, president of the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other business leaders said business confidence must be restored by arresting and punishing the culprits.

The foreign missions have warned their staff to exercise maximum vigilance and take security precautions. Most shut their gates for the rest of the day following the incident.

Witnesses said some 200 visa seekers were turned away by the US consulate on Wednesday.

More paramilitary troops were posted at the consulate to strengthen security and US Ambassador John Monjo, based in Islamabad, met with provincial government leaders here.

Investment commitments worth several billion of dollars have been made by US companies alone in recent months, including four billion dollars in energy development.

Some of the projects were to be located in Sindh, but there were no immediate indications that plans were being postponed or cancelled after the killings of the two consulate workers.

Bhutto, moving to calm American nerves, said in a message to Clinton she would assign the country's "senior-most investigators" to carry out a full investigation and apprehend the attackers.

The army was withdrawn from the city in November after deployment there for about two and a half years to restore order.

Stock Exchange Drops 29 Points After Killings

BK0903110695 Islamabad THE NEWS in English
9 Mar 95 p 13

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Karachi: The killing of two Americans who worked for the U.S. consulate in Pakistan on Wednesday [8 March] threw the share market into a tailspin. The price index tumbled by about 29 points in one go reflecting the bearish mood of the market. The eruption of fresh violence dashed the hope of a rise in foreign investment.

The killings sent a shock wave through the market and nervous investors hastened to off-load their holdings. The cold-blooded murder of US consulate officials has added a new dimension to the wanton killing going on in this metropolis. Market circles feared that it would affect foreign investment leading to the withdrawal of foreign country funds which had of late started showing increasing interest in equities of Pakistani companies. [passage omitted]

"Who will come to Pakistan for investment if even the diplomats are not safe?" said Jamil Mehboob, acting president of the Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industries.

"It will further affect trade and commercial activities in Karachi where the worsening law and order situation has resulted in heavy losses to industries," he said. [passage omitted] "We urge the government to...apprehend the culprits and award exemplary punishment and bring the situation under tight control to avoid any impact on foreign investment in Pakistan," said Nisar Memon, local representative of IBM and president of the Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry. [passage omitted]

Editorials Lament Killings, Violence, Unrest

'Frightening New Dimension' Added

BK0903055695 Islamabad THE NEWS in English
9 Mar 95 p 7

[Editorial: "New dimension to killings"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The killing of two American diplomats in Karachi on Wednesday [8 March] morning adds a frightening new dimension to the unending violence in Pakistan's largest city. Already wracked by political, sectarian, terrorist and ethnic mayhem which claims a painfully high death count every day, Karachi will now have to contend with the danger of being sucked into the vortex of clandestine international conflicts. This point may possibly be confirmed by the nature of the targeted killing of the diplomats which indicates that only murder was intended; that the victims were Americans only exacerbates the situation.

It is not clear how the government will react to this latest incident, but given its past performance every time violence surpasses earlier levels, it might be much less

than what is needed. It is not that two foreign diplomats were killed which calls for an heightened response, but that Pakistan cannot possibly allow an addition to its existing repertoire of violence. The depressingly weak effort of the authorities to contain the existing strife has only encouraged the forces of evil to continually raise the level of their gruesome output without fear. Twenty-four hours earlier three persons became victims of sectarian killing in Lahore, while Karachi produced its daily toll of casualties. Even the Eid spirit did not deter the murderers from their ruthless task, as the carnage continued during the holidays and afterwards in Karachi and elsewhere. The value of life has suddenly plummeted to a new low with the government seemingly powerless and the leaders unable to comprehend the enormity of the threat the country faces.

But it is not only the present rulers who have shown indifference towards what is happening. Even the country's leadership of all persuasions betrays a distressing insensitivity which is reflected in its strangely muted reactions over the bloodletting. While some of them are engaged in taking up issues that are remotely connected to the situation, others are huddled with party members to deal with political questions. Apart from perfunctory statements, our leaders feel their responsibility ends when they make their concern known. This might explain the overall apathetic atmosphere that pervades in the country, with the administration sitting on its hands and much of the public maintaining a sullen silence. The government would commit a grave error of judgement if it misread this lack of popular reaction as supportive of whatever policies it is pursuing. The ultimate price of this unconcern will have to be paid, not by the leaders, but by the nation. The murder of a Pakistani or a foreigner might add to the dismal statistics, but each incident also further corrodes the government's power.

Every Citizen 'Shares the Sorrow'

BK0903085395 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN
OBSERVER in English 9 Mar 95 p 1

[Editorial note: "May God Give Govt Patience To Bear the Loss!"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The people of Pakistan feel profoundly upset and hurt over the senseless killing of the two American diplomats in Karachi. They find themselves simply speechless over this murderous outrage. From the people of Pakistan go out heartfelt condolences to the families of those killed and to the entire American people. There are no words to give voice to the sorrow in Pakistan.

Many in Pakistan also recall the air crash in which the serving American ambassador died with the President of Pakistan and so many other high ranking officers. But that was an accident. The killings of yesterday were no accident. It was part of an epidemic of blood-letting which has been raging for years virtually with the permission, if not connivance or oversight of the Government of Pakistan.

Predictably, there has been an expression of horror from all sides in Pakistan. This is quite as it should be. The Prime Minister and her government, the Foreign Office, the leader of the Opposition, have offered profuse condolences. All that is perfectly in order. Foreign diplomats serving in Pakistan are Pakistan's responsibility. The present government of Pakistan cannot escape the blame and ignominy for what has happened.

After due condolences have been rendered by the Prime Minister and her government, the people of Pakistan have a question or two to ask. On the eve of Eid the same hands which killed the American diplomats slaughtered seven of two neighbouring families, tortured their womenfolk. Did anyone in authority from the President, the Prime Minister downward, or from the leader of the Opposition downward on his side express any sense of pain, let alone outrage?

By the evening yesterday, the entire ruling apparatus in the Islamic republic of Pakistan was distraught with sorrow and statements of sorrow and apology flowed like floods from every nook and corner of the government. The same government has seldom so much as cared to take a look at what has been happening in Karachi for five years. During her present tenure, the Prime Minister has visited around thirty foreign cities. To bleeding Karachi, reeking with the stench of the most degrading and inhuman crime she hasn't been half as frequently.

There is absolutely no disagreement with the government condoling the loss of two American lives. Every Pakistani shares the sorrow and pain of those bereaved and the entire American nation. But it is only natural to turn to our own government to inquire how exactly it feels when the blood of its own people is spilled. The soil of Karachi is soaked with the blood of Pakistan's own sons and daughters. Nobody in this government turns a hair!

How is one to suppress the feelings when the government which couldn't care less for the dozen-a-day killing of Pakistani citizens suddenly becomes sensitive and is all tears and sobs now? Dear citizens of Pakistan. If you have tears, prepare to shed them now, for the two Americans killed because their souls have joined the souls of those thousands of innocent Pakistanis killed in Karachi. The only difference is that for Pakistanis killed, there is not a word.

The message is clear and loud. Who's who as far as the government of Pakistan is concerned, or would care.

'Pattern of Blood Letting'

BK0903061795 Islamabad THE NATION in English
9 Mar 95 p 6

[Editorial: "Murder of diplomats"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] To the already widespread and complex matrix of blood feuds of Karachi has now been added the murder of two American diplomats. They

were killed while going in a van to their place of work. The general pattern of blood letting has so far been fuelled by mutual hatreds of a domestic nature, mostly ethnic or sectarian, but no foreigner was ever targeted. Even now it is hard to say whether the murderers were Pakistanis. Apart from ethnic and sectarian groups battling with each other, Karachi is full of foreigners of all hues, ranging from people who have fought for religions and political causes in their own countries to just plain US-haters who have their own scores to settle on issues pertaining to the Gulf War, Palestine, Libya, Iran, etc. Pakistan's efforts to return them to their countries have not succeeded, partly because there is a lobby in Pakistan which considers their causes holy or justifiable and partly of the government's incompetence and lack of political will. That is not to say that the motive for these murders has to be any one of such causes. It could either be a revenge attack for last month's arrest of Ramzi Ahmad Yusuf by US agents from Islamabad, for his alleged involvement in the World Trade Centre bombing in New York, or it could simply be a plain act of terrorism. It would certainly act as a damper on Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's visit to the US next month and Hillary Clinton's expected visit to Pakistan this month. Under the circumstances, the theory of a foreign hand, mostly looked upon with scepticism by cynics here, cannot be ruled out altogether. Apart from them inspired by sectarian or political zeal who now find the general climate of mayhem in the country ideally suited to their purpose, it presents an ideal opportunity to foreign agents provocateur to fulfil their agenda with impunity. For one thing the Prime Minister's efforts to attract foreign investment will be further thwarted (the Karachi Stock Exchange index immediately fell by 25 points after the murders in Lahore and Karachi) and for another, Pakistan's image abroad of a moderate Islamic state could get a big jolt.

Whether the entire responsibility for the situation can be laid at the door of the present government may be debatable, but its reluctance in not accepting the ethnic and sectarian challenge and pussy footing round it for more than a year has aggravated the situation. Not only has the Federal Government failed to fulfil its responsibilities vis-a-vis the Karachi situation, it still insists upon showing up the incompetent and clueless Chief Minister who should have been sacked long ago on the basis of his poor record. The monster of hate, fed daily on innocent blood now spreading from province to province like a jungle fire, now holds both the rulers and the ruled hostage to its whim. Political expediences can no longer offer a convenient excuse to the government. A firm hand at the helm is needed. With both Karachi and Lahore up in flames, the government is running out of time to show that hand. The Prime Minister must drastically cut down her foreign travel, talk less and act more if she wants her government to survive. The people are now fed up with the way law and order is being tackled.

Shi'ite Leader, Aide Murdered in Lahore

BK0703154295 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 7 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Military sources have categorically rejected reports that the Army has been called out to assist the civil administration in Jhang. The sources described as baseless reports published in a certain section of the press today that the Army has been called out in the city. Meanwhile, daily life has become normal in Jhang town and the prohibitory order under Section 144 has been lifted. Some suspects believed to be involved in the murder of five people last Sunday [5 March] have been arrested and the investigation is in progress.

Meanwhile, two unidentified persons murdered Dr. Mohammad Ali Naqvi, a central leader of the Shi'ite Tehrik-i-Nifaz-i-Fiqh-i-Jafria, and his close associate Mohammad Taqi in Lahore this morning. A case has been registered. The police have arrested some persons and are continuing their investigations.

Senator Blames Hindu, Jewish 'Agents'

NC0803220395 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Urdu 1330 GMT 7 Mar 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Dear listeners. As you heard in the news, a prominent member of the Tehrik-e Nefaz-e Fiqh-e Ja'fariyah [Movement for the Implementation of Islamic Jurisprudence—Shiite movement] of Pakistan was martyred in the Pakistani city of Lahore. We interviewed Senator Syed Jawad Hadi in this regard, which interview you will now hear:

[Begin recording] [Hadi] His martyrdom has not only inflicted a major loss on Islamic forces in Pakistan but this is a massive setback on an international level.

Dr. Mohammad Ali Naqvi always advocated intra-Muslim unity and called on Muslims to remain united. I believe that those elements are involved in his martyrdom who do not want Muslims to be united and to live in harmony. By martyring him, anti-Islamic forces once again tried to pit Shiites and Sunnis against one another. I believe that Hindu and Jewish agents are involved in his martyrdom and his assassination.

We should unmask these colluding elements and inform the public that if we, the Shiites and Sunnis, do not come into the arena against these terrorists and arsonists, then no one's life will be safe in this country.

[Unidentified Correspondent] Sir, could you please tell us what the Tehrik-e Nefaz-e Fiqh-e Ja'fariyah is doing in this regard?

[Hadi] It has always been the Tehrik-e Ja'fariyah's stance to call on Muslims to increase unity and solidarity. The respected leader Allama Syed Sajid Ali Naqvi exhorted his followers and all Muslims on every occasion to live in peace and unity. This incident—which is a very major one for us, not only for the Tehrik-e Ja'fariyah, for the Ja'fariyah members, but also for all Muslims—this is a great loss, a serious incident.

On this sorrowful occasion we appeal to all Muslims, especially to all the youth in general, and of the Ja'fariyah members in particular to remain calm. This is a major conspiracy to make the Shiites and Sunnis fight with one another which we must foil.

[Correspondent] Do you wish to convey any other special message to the Pakistani people?

[Hadi] My only message is that they should identify these arsonists and terrorists, foil their aims, and unmask their faces.

[Correspondent] Thank you very much. [end recording]

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